JOHN BULL

Vol. I. No. II. | SATURDAY, AUG. 18th, 1906. | ONE PENNY.

[Registered at the G.P.O. as a Newspaper.]

The world is a bundle of hay;
Mankind are the asses who pull;
Each tugs it a different way,
And the greatest of all is John Bull

—BYRON.

Edited by
HORATIO BOTTOMLEY, M.P.

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No. 11. Saturday, August 18th, 1906. One Penny.

NOTICES, &c.

The Publishing Office of JOHN BULL *is at* 186, *Fleet Street, E.C., where all trade inquiries should be sent.*

The Editorial Offices are at 56a, *Pall Mall, S.W.*

All editorial inquiries MUST BE MADE BY LETTER,

All matter appearing in JOHN BULL, *unless otherwise signed, is editorial.*

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JOHN BULL'S BISCUITS.

AWARD NO. 23.

For posing as the apostle of the Second Ballot
KEIR HARDY, M.P.
TAKES THE BISCUIT.

AWARD NO. 24.

For claiming that the Court of Appeal's decision in the Education Case constitutes a vindication of the Passive Resister,
DR. CLIFFORD
TAKES THE BISCUIT.

AWARD NO. 25.

Mr. and Mrs. LLOYD WILLEY, of Bow, and
Mr. and Mrs. HENRY LEWIS MORGAN, of Bristol,
in addition to the Dunmow Flitch of Bacon, also
TAKE THE BISCUIT.

THE WORLD, THE FLESH, AND THE DEVIL.

And so, after all, Parliament has been playing at "Aunt Sally" all these months, "Denominational Teaching at State expense" being nothing more than an imaginary grievance. We have never read the Education Act of 1902, and do not propose doing so, at any rate during the holiday season; but we can quite understand this recent decision. For we *have* read the Bill of 1906, and as it at present stands we will undertake to drive a Vanguard 'bus safely through it. But had not we better all wait a little before saying more? Suppose the House of Lords, on appeal, reverses the judgment of the Court of Appeal? Shan't we look silly? And suppose it does not? Will all the local authorities who have wrongly been paying for religious teaching be surcharged the amounts they have illegally paid—and will the owners of the voluntary schools be called upon to refund what they have wrongly received? What a harvest there is in store for the lawyers!

And this reflection calls attention to one of the very gravest scandals of our judicial system. Have you ever really considered the iniquity of casting upon litigants the burden and expense of correcting the errors of our judges and juries? A friend of ours recently brought an action in the King's Bench Division before a judge and a special jury, and he won his case. Let us take stock as we go on. So far he has one judge and twelve jurymen on his side. The defendant appealed, and the Court of Appeal, consisting of three judges, upheld the decision of the Court below. Now, he has four judges and the jury in his favour. The case went to the House of Lords, where, by the votes to two judges against one, the appeal was allowed. Thus, he had five judges against two in his favour—as well as the jury—but he had to pay *the whole of the costs, from beginning to end, and he went bankrupt.* The original claim was for about £200. The total costs came to nearly £2,000! We intend to introduce a Bill next session to remedy this great wrong. Such a measure is worth a hundred so-called Education Acts.

After running nearly thirty bogus "Labour" candidates in the '95 election with Tory money, with the palpable object of defeating the wishes of the majority

of the electors—and repeating this conduct last week at Cockermouth—Keir Hardie had the calm audacity last week to pose as the champion of the second ballot, and the ever gullible *Daily News* takes him seriously and welcomes his "suggestions" as "timely." Had he been of this way of thinking a few years ago, his financial relations with Mr. Maltman Barrie, the great Conservative agent, would not have been of such an intimate nature. Even now, the old tie of comradeship between these two gentlemen appears to exist, for in the current issue of the *Labour Leader* is advertised "The Labour Day, Protection and Free Trade from the Workman's point of view, by Mr. Maltman Barrie—the text book on the subject." Still, we shall soon have an opportunity of testing Mr. Keir Hardie's sincerity. We will have a second ballot—the expense to be borne by the candidate or candidates who did not poll an agreed proportion of the votes recorded at the first ballot. How's that, Umpire?

What is this news from Glasgow? Total closing of public-houses admitted to be a failure? We are not surprised. The number of cases of drunkenness before the whole of the London police-courts on the day after last Bank Holiday was less than the total in Glasgow on an ordinary Monday morning. And this takes no account of home drunkenness. Oh, ye Scribes and Pharisees! You know very well that by shutting the door of the public-house in the working man's face, and then shutting your own eyes, you make of him either a beast or a hypocrite. Nearly twenty thousand drunk and incapable, or drunk and disorderly, cases in Glasgow during the past six months! Men taking large quantities of drink to their homes for consumption before their wives and children; bottles of whisky carried to the theatres; bogus clubs—secret drinking of every kind. Neighbouring towns invaded by infuriated men and women, goaded to drink by your very interference with their freedom—the streets, aye, and the home, transformed into a saturnalia of drunkenness! Are you proud of your work? No wonder that the Glasgow magistrates begin to see their folly. And now the public-houses are to be open "on the spring and autumn holidays from noon till six oclock." We say, they "begin" to see their folly. It is a very slow and a very poor beginning. There is no middle course. You must treat men as either beasts or human beings—and in no circumstances are the laws applicable to the one suitable to the other. The drunkard, you will say, *is* a beast. Yes, but it is when he *is* drunk. Therefore the burden rests upon you of avoiding all legislation calculated to encourage the disease. Education, sanitation, recreation—these will do more than all your Acts of Parliament. Try it.

"Pictorial illustrations which may draw attention to divorce cases are not necessary, nor can they be said to be really desirable in the public interest," was the pronouncement of the President of the Divorce Court on the eve of the holidays. He therefore gave notice that when the Court resumes in October they must be discontinued. The *Daily News*, of all papers, is aggrieved at this proposal. It seems extraordinary that the sketching of persons in any Court of Justice should ever have been tolerated. Publicity of even the most unsavoury story is a necessary evil. There are advantages which may be urged in favour of minute detail beyond what is considered appropriate for an ordinary newspaper. Nothing of the kind can be said for pictorial illustration, which only serves to make the evil thing attractive to readers for whom it is not intended. Besides, why should people unfortunate enough to be mixed up in litigation be subjected to such additional torture? Of course, there has always been this consolation—nobody could ever be recognised by the newspaper "portraits." On the other hand, there was the danger of innocent people being "identified" by these dauls. Indeed, no married man is safe in taking home an "illustrated" report of a divorce or breach of promise case without first carefully comparing the counterfeit presentments of the heroes and villains with his own classic features. Hence these cheers.

How true it is that truth is stranger than fiction! In "His House in Order," Derek, the reputed son of Jasper Filson, discovers a packet of his dead mother's letters in his school-room. In the Divorce Court last week, a Mr. Hanley, in looking for his baby's gloves in a drawer, found some letters from the co-respondent which conclusively proved his wife's misconduct. Pinero can say with Whistler that "Nature is catching up to Art." Why *will* people keep their love-letters—at any rate, those they get after marriage?

Then take the case of E. Underwood and Son, Ltd., which came before the Bankruptcy Court last week. Here we have something more tangible to go upon. According to the Official Receiver's report, a libel action brought by the company against a newspaper ended in a verdict for the company with £1,160 damages. On the other hand, the company lost their actions against a number of other newspapers and are liable for the costs, estimated at £5,000. The company is bankrupt, whilst the solicitors and counsel engaged in the case are enjoying their Long Vacation. It would be interesting to know how much, if any, of that £1,160 ever came into the hands of Underwood and Co., or whether it was all absorbed in fighting those other actions.

In reference to our recent article dealing with the objectionable advertisements appearing in the *News of the World*, we note that they have now been removed from its columns. We congratulate the proprietors on taking this step, and hope other journals will follow their example.

There is a fallacy underlying the assumption of Mr. G. K. Chesterton that the Fall of Man was directly due to the Simple Life. The fact is, when Eve stole the apple, after Adam had hoisted her up the tree, she had become heartily weary of the Simple Life; peradventure, too, a little shocked at being compelled on any and every occasion to wear the same garment. Her yearning was for life manifest in complexity. She wanted to travel, to see the world, to start luxuriating, to be the leader of a Smart Set. In any case, it was not the Simple Life which caused the Fall, but the yearning for the Complex Life—and it is not surprising.

Though it is doubtless an excellent principle to maintain the ex-territoriality of the Embassies, we still think that Ambassadors, secretaries, and attachés accredited to foreign countries should conform to the laws of the country in which they live. This is not merely the obligation of courtesy, but the requirement of diplomatic tact. Mr. Reid, the American Ambassador, knew quite well that he was disobeying the law when he allowed his chauffeur to drive him at thirty miles an hour the other day, and yet when summoned by the police in the ordinary course, he pleaded, and successfully pleaded, the privileges of the Embassy. It is like accepting a man's invitation to dinner, and then calling on everybody at table to witness your utter contempt of the menu.

This recalls the story told of Huxley, that he was once sitting at dinner next his hostess, a lady who liked to play the part of lady arbitress to the whole neighbourhood. She told him she disapproved of the Athanasian Creed so much that she had once left the village church as soon as the parson commenced to read it. "Now, Mr. Huxley," she questioned, "don't you think

I was quite right to mark my disapproval?" "My dear Lady ——," replied Huxley, "I should as soon think of rising and leaving your table because I disapproved of one of the entrées." The American Ambassador may not like the regulations governing the speed of motor-cars, but the fact that he is receiving the hospitality of a country not his own should make him the more anxious to respect them.

No doubt this is the golden age of precocity, but we are much surprised to learn that, instead of a man being too old at forty, as was the case until recently, he is now too old at thirty-six. The revelation comes from an out-of-work shop manager, who has discovered by repeatedly unsuccessful applications for situations that, "if you happen to be over thirty-five and have a family of more than one, you are not wanted." This touches us on a sore point, for we are well over the age limit; and the best advice we can give to the vast army of thirty-fivers is to be ten years younger—and look it. The desire for youthful genius allied to large experience appears to extend even to lady typists, the latest statistics showing that about eighteen is the age preferred.

Talking of old age, Mr. George Bernard Shaw has attained the sum of fifty years, and at the time of writing still keeps his name in the newspapers. In appearance he is not beautiful, but his clothes are his own, and some day he will be deeply mourned by all who know him. Mr. Shaw's ideal of government is a world run by the firm of Shaw and Providence, with Providence as sleeping partner; his theory of life being a paradox expressed in an epigram. Withal our congratulations are to him in his persistent survival, for, after all, life would be deadly dull if it were not for those who exist to make us laugh.

When will the London, Brighton and South Coast Railway directors remember that they have a western, as well as an eastern, branch? So far as the service to Brighton and Eastbourne is concerned, there is not much to complain of, but, as regards Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight, the facts are very different. The line is badly built, badly served, unpunctual and dirty. The *quickest* train from Portsmouth to London (a distance of 74 miles) takes over two hours. The Isle of Wight times are equally long in proportion. All the capital expenditure appears to be confined to the eastern branch, and when rolling stock is too old for that service it is transferred to the western. Of course, with proper competition this state of things would soon be remedied, but the London and South Western traffic is pooled. This is the sort of thing which makes people talk about the nationalisation of railways.

Here is another remarkable case of magisterial interpretation of the vaccination laws. Before the Tottenham Bench the other day an applicant asked for exemption on the ground of his conscientious belief that vaccination would injure his child's health. The magistrate (Mr. S. Lloyd Stacey) observed: "The only question for the Bench to ask you is 'What do you understand by being injurious to the health of the child?'" As a matter of fact, no such question ought to have been asked by the Bench, but let that pass. Here is the applicant's reply: "That it will be detrimental to her physical health. I have come into contact with children who have suffered severely with vaccination, and *have had the painful duty of burying others who have been killed by it.*" And what do you think was the magistrate's answer? Simply this: "Refused." Is it any wonder that the father should have retorted: "Well, I can tell you it won't be vaccinated." When is this farce and scandal to end?

Commenting upon the dark financial cloud which has fallen upon Lord Amherst of Hackney, owing to the defalcations of the family solicitor, the *Daily Mirror* says that his lordship "has made himself beloved in the neighbourhood of Didlington Hall, and it would not be safe for the defaulting lawyer to show his face there." Personally, we cannot see that the deceased attorney would be running very much risk, for having been buried now for a considerable time, it is quite possible his features would not be recognised. By the way, would not Didlington Hall have been a more appropriate address for the solicitor?

Apropos of our recent anecdote about Nonconformist Tim and Churchman Willie and the silver spoons, a correspondent suggests that a suitable second chapter would be that whilst John Bull was examining Churchman Willie's boot, Nonconformist Tim was busy packing all the rest of the silver and making a bolt for the door, but that just as he was congratulating himself on getting safely through, he was met by the Landlord, who exclaims: "I cannot allow you to pass like this. You will have to be amended and learn the meaning of the eighth Commandment." Thank goodness, there is no reason for us to combat our friend's argument at present. This is the close season for the education controversy.

Passing through the village of Royston the other day, we were amused at certain outward and visible signs of a feud between two adjoining property-owners. One of them has built a house upon his land, evidently against the wish of his neighbour, who has retaliated by erecting a large hoarding immediately opposite the windows of the edifice, the owner of which replies by affixing a huge board to his chimney stack with these words painted upon it—"Christian Era, 1906." We understand the two gentleman in question are members of opposing religious sects, and that feeling runs high between them on certain matters ecclesiastic. We would suggest to the owner of the chimney-pots that a better motto for his board would be "Let there be light."

Mr. Smillie certainly succeeded in distinguishing himself at Cockermouth, but some steps must be taken to prevent the repetitions of such scandals. It is high time that we had proportional representation, or at least second ballots. Why do the Tories imagine a vain thing about Cockermouth? The Liberal and Labour vote is only ten less than last time, while the Tory vote is 193 less. "What a glorious victory," quoth little Arthurkin. The Guest did not come to stay.

"Who to Marry" is the delightfully grammatical heading to some correspondence in the *Daily Mirror*. What follows seems to prove that there is as little common sense in the discussion as grammar. This is what we read: "Bitter experience teaches that flowery love-making least seldom results in a happy marriage." Evidently the writer is not aware that "least seldom," if it means anything, means "most often." Why then should the experience be bitter? Some people like their love-making to be flowery.

One lady, who boldly signs herself "Unmarried," writes: "I cannot understand, by the way, why so many nice men marry simpering, old-fashioned, ill-dressed, ugly women, then afterwards wish they had married the bright, well-dressed girl, who is a credit to take out, and who would take a pride in her home and children." Simpering, old-fashioned, ill-dressed, ugly married women, please explain.

Curious coincidence. Mr. Injustice Grantham, travelling from Ripon to Leeds, was struck by a bottle flung from a passing train. The same day, Mr. Robert Standish Sievier was travelling in Yorkshire. If he were not so notorious a teetotaller, we might be tempted to ask whether he was accompanied by a bottle. Anyhow, he is a bad shot.

IN THE CITY.

Waring and Gillow, Limited.

We have before us the report and accounts of this company, *dated July 23 last*, for the year 1905. It is a document requiring study; and, having given it the necessary attention, we have come to the conclusion that there are several matters calling for further elucidation. We may be wrong, but, somehow or other, we are left with a very strong idea that the company has been biting off a bit more than it can digest, and is desirous of concealing the fact from the public and its shareholders. There is a great deal in the report about the King and Queen, and the Princess of Wales, and other great personages, but very little about the cash in hand and other dull details of that description. Indeed, "cash" is coupled with "investments"—*less loans secured upon them*—and the two, together, are put at £427,782 18s. 9d. How much of this is liquid cash, and how much is the nominal surplus upon the pawned "investments," we are not told. But we have heard something which, if true, is of very disquieting import to the shareholders. Then there are "sundry debtor balances," £518,071 11s. 1d. It is said that "a pro-"vision has been made for doubtful debts," but *what* provision? It is a big item, and we should like to know more about it. The serious point, however, is "cash and investments (less loans on investments), "£427,782 18s. 9d." What do the auditors say about it? Here is their very guarded report: "In our opinion, the "balance-sheet is properly drawn up, *and, subject to the* "*value of the investments being as stated*, exhibits a true "and correct view of the state of the company's affairs "as shown by the books of the company." The qualification is a remarkable one. Have the auditors taken no steps to check the value placed by the directors upon these "investments," and are they consenting parties to the cash balances being thus concealed?

There is a total capital liability of nearly two millions and three-quarters, and an indebtedness of over a quarter of a million to sundry creditors. As at present advised, we do not see security for anything like this sum, whilst as to the so-called "Reserve and undivided "profits, £175,709 3s.," we desire to ask, where is it? Has it been invested? Does it really exist at all, in any serious sense as a reserve?

No, we are not impressed with the report and accounts of Waring and Gillow, Limited, and we regret that, looking at the company as a public investment, and from the point of view of the shareholders and unsecured creditors, we are unable to subscribe to the view of the Board that "the prospects for the current year are most "encouraging." Shall we have to wait till *next* autumn to know whether we are right?

"The Talisman Consolidated, Ltd."

This company during the financial year recently concluded has demonstrated how a moribund mine may be resuscitated by the consistent application of scientific and economical general management.

For the year 1905-1906 the bullion recovered has risen to £45,777—being an increase of nearly 75 per cent. upon the previous year; while working costs have remained the same, and "machinery and plant account" has been written down to £15,000. Cash in hand is now £14,917, as against £7,389 at the corresponding period of last year.

But it is to the future possibilities of the mine that intelligent operators will direct their attention, and the chairman's remarks under this head are interesting, particularly in regard to the No. 10 level. Here it appears they have been driving south with the hope of picking up what is locally known as the "Dubbs" section or chute of ore. This, we are told, has been worked successfully in the past history of the mine, but only down to the second level, and this body has been attacked now from the 10th level. Recent cables announce the fact that at a distance of 1,816ft. from the shaft ore has been entered, giving an average value of £5 9s. per ton. Twenty-five feet of this material has been exposed in the drive, and values are stated to still continue in the face. The main significance of this discovery lies in the fact that heretofore the average value of the mine has only been £3 3s. per ton, and that it now adds to its ore reserves some 800ft. of vertical backs, assumed to carry the increased values.

An up-to-date method of checking previous estimates is in vogue at this mine, and is found in the practice of half-yearly reports being made by engineers independent of each other, no engineer reporting twice in succession. The last gentleman to inspect was Mr. C. S. Herzig—of Bewick, Moreing and Co.—to whom the chairman of the company refers as a man of exceptional ability.

Omnibus Company Results.

The returns of the London General Omnibus Company and the London Road Car Company indicate very clearly the difficulties with which omnibus companies have to reckon at the present time—difficulties for which they are in no way responsible, and which it is impossible for them to avoid. The London General Omnibus Company has announced for the first half of the year a dividend at the rate of 6 per cent. per annum, or 2 per cent. less than that for the corresponding period of 1905. The published traffics show a decline of nearly £26,000 for the half-year, and this follows on a decrease of some £3,000 in the June half of 1905, and of £13,000 in the December half of last year.

The London Road Car Company is in an equally sad plight. Although the number of passengers carried during the half-year ended June rose from 37,378,000 to 38,154,000, the net profits declined from £17,000 to £13,600. The explanation given is that this unfavourable result is caused by "the low earnings of "the horse-drawn cars, largely due to the unseasonable "weather prevailing during the spring months, and to "the competition of the swifter running and more popular "motor omnibuses." And the second cause is, of course, the most important. The cost of feeding-stuffs goes up and down, but, notwithstanding the grumblers, the motor omnibus has come to stay, and not only have the horse omnibus companies to reckon with this formidable rival, they are compelled by the exigencies of the situation to spend enormous sums in putting motor omnibuses on the roads, machines which are almost certain to be supplanted by vehicles of an improved pattern before they have time to become old. The position is one of great difficulty, and for the next year or two the directors of the old omnibus companies will have to reckon with a very anxious time.

The Transvaal Gold Output.

The Transvaal gold output for July is another record, being of the value of £2,089,004, as against £2,021,813 for June, and £1,781,944 for the corresponding month of last year. In his "Transvaal Problems," Mr. Lionel Philips assumed that the gold output for 1909, allowing for a fall in the yield to 9 dwts. per ton, should be of the value of £29,000,000, but it looks as if this will prove to be an under-estimate The rapid increase in the output must be of great benefit to British trade, but a wise policy would encourage local production of consumable commodities. No considerable reduction in their cost is to be expected unless local production enters the field, and there is no good reason why it should not do so, and until it is done there can be no considerable reduction in the working expenses of the mines. The encouragement of husbandry is a first necessity of the Transvaal, but this is a truth that seems to be only imperfectly appreciated there. The introduction of Chinese has not always decreased the cost per ton milled. Many companies show increases, and in some cases despite the benefit of enlarged mills. Compar-

ing the expenses of last year with the June quarter of this, Driefontein has gone up from 23s. 9d. to 24s. 4d.; Ferreira from 23s. 9d. to 24s. 3d.; Goch from 23s. 6d. to 25s. 1d.; Jumpers Deep from 26s. 7d. to 27s. 4d.; Langlaagte Deep from 21s. to 23s. 11d.; Porges Randfontein from 23s. 6d. to 24s. 2d.; Princess from 34s. 9d. to 38s. 9d.; Rietfontein from 27s. 1d. to 30s. 5d.; Roodeport United from 26s. 9d. to 29s. 10d.; Village Main Reef from 21s.. 4d. to 23s. 4½d. On the other hand, there are reductions, but mostly in respect of companies producing at a high cost, as, for example, Nigel Deep, from 48s. 3d. to 41s.; Knight's Deep from 27s. 10d. to 20s., and Crown Reef from 25s. 3d. to 21s. 10d. How vital the reduction of working costs is upon the Rand is shown by a comparison of the average value of the ore, which may be taken at something under 43s. with its value elsewhere. In New Zealand, for example, the Waihi Mines have averaged 55s. 4d.; in Queensland Mount Morgan 109s. 10d., Charters Towers Field 103s. 7d.; Great Boulder 102s.; Kalgurlie 140s.; in India, Mysore 108s. 7d.; Champion 107s. 3d., Ooregum 83s. 5d.; in the United States Cripple Creek (Portland) 200s. 6d, Nevada (Comstock) 205s. 4d., Colorado (Camp Bird) 127s. 9d.; in Venezuela El Callao 152s. 2d.; in Mexico, El Oro 55s. 9d.; in Canada (Le Roi) 49s. 6d.

The Newnes Meeting.

We referred last week to what we considered the unnecessary reticence of the report of George Newnes, Limited, as to the causes which led to the losses admitted in the report, and which necessitated reduction on dividends, a reduction which would have been much more serious but for the action of Sir George Newnes in providing a portion of the sum necessary to meet the deficiency. The general meeting of the company has now been held, and Sir George Newnes, who presided, expressed his regret that "for the first time in "the history of this Company, we have been compelled "to reduce the dividend." But he gave no explanation of the losses. All that he said about them was that "we have made certain losses in what may be called "subsidiary publications. These losses have now "ceased, and we have effected many economies, and so "anticipate that this reduction of dividend is only tem-"porary. . . . I have made a contribution in order "that the shareholders might obtain as large a dividend "as possible under the circumstances." At the conclusion of the Chairman's speech one shareholder asked him the extent of his contribution, and whether it was to be considered a loan or a free gift, and a second shareholder asked him on what publications the losses had been incurred. To only one of these very proper questions would the Chairman reply. He said that the contribution is not in the nature of a loan.

Frankly, we do not regard the dividend increases, announced, projected and rumoured, on American railway shares as a bull point. They usually indicate a magnate's unloading campaign.

What is the matter with the "Furness" group of companies. On dividends their shares should be quoted much higher, but the market does not like the steady selling from the North. Who is realising?

One by one the big brewery companies are falling into line. "Bass" for the first time this year makes its accounts public. Net profit £360,800, reserve £1,370,000. Prodigious!

With a carry forward equal to a 7 per cent. ordinary dividend, Sewing Cottons should make another good distribution this year. But—after! Textiles are erratic.

Central London traffics continue to fall off. A judicious revision of fares might help matters, but increasing competition has to be faced. And how about depreciation!

"John Bull" Investment Trust.

Dividend warrants for 1s. in the £, being an interim distribution of 5 per cent., have been posted.

INQUIRIES.

Provident Association of London.—We have received several letters from bondholders of this association who take exception to our view of its position and management. It is impossible to give a complete reply to these criticisms in this column, or in our present issue, but as the question is an important one, having regard to the number of persons interested in the Association, we propose to examine it with some particularity next week.

Purchase of House.—C. A. J. (Cardiff).—If you can pay £150 towards the purchase of a house costing £600, you will have no difficulty in obtaining the balance, on reasonable terms, from a building society. You could not do better than apply to the Perpetual Building Society, 34, New Bridge Street, E.C.

New York Life Insurance Company.—W. J. (Weston-super-Mare).—Having regard to the fact that you have only paid two premiums, we think you would do well to get out of it and insure with an English company. The question of solvency is not involved, but you can judge for yourself, from the evidence open to all, of the character of the management. And even if it were as good as it has been proved to be bad, we should advise English insurers to insure with English offices, over which, at least, they have some sort of control, which is not the case with the American.

Sovereign Sickness and Accident Company.—S. W. (Forest Hill).—We have no information respecting this company.

London Road Car Company.—Shareholder (Dover).—We should sell. See what we say about the older omnibus companies elsewhere.

Two Companies.—E. L. (Clapham Junction).—(1) We are inclined to advise you to hold No. 1 shares. The company is under much better management than it was, and now the capital is cut down its position is sounder; but the shares are still very speculative. (2) The business of this company is on the down grade, and we advise you to sell.

Three Mining Shares.—Standeley (St. Ivo).—All three shares are very speculative, and we should prefer other selections. We are obliged to you for your kind offer, and your pleasant reference to John Bull.

Lottery Ticket.—H. M. S. (Islington).—We thank you for the Moy Elta duplicate lottery ticket. You say a friend of yours has had a book of them sent to him without asking for them. If you get any put them in the waste paper basket.

Anglo-Japanese Bank.—L. (Conway).—You should hold the shares.

Manchester Ship Canal.—Fourth (Alloa).—(1) The Canal is doing better, but the time when its ordinary shares will be on the dividend list is still very distant. (2) One of the best books we know for your purpose is "The Law and Practice of the Stock Exchange," published by Wm. Clowes and Sons, Limited, price 10s. 6d.

The Purchase of Bonds.—L. Dorad (Skelton-in-Cleveland).—We advise you not to have anything to do with Messrs. Cunliffe, Russell and Co., or the bonds they advertise. If you have only "a small sum of £5 or £6 to invest" the best thing to do is to leave it in the Savings Bank until it has grown a little larger.

The Neutorile Company.—Sceptical (Southwark).—We thank you for your kind wishes. If you like to send us the papers relating to this company we will look them over.

Klerksdorp Props.—Republique (Llangollen).—Your presumption is quite correct. We have read your extracts, but they do not convince us.

Ives, Anderson and Co.—B. (Hull).—Our advice to you is to have nothing to do with the "Ideal System."

The Central Fire Insurance Company.—A. T. (Verviers).—The company is a young one, being established as late as 1899. The funds at the beginning of the year, exclusive of capital, amounted to £41,042, and premiums, less reinsurance, to £153,745. We do not know of any particular advantage offered by this company over and above those obtainable from the older-established companies.

U.S. Steel.—H. M. (Morecambe).—The net earnings for the first half of 1896 were 76,760,000 dols., which, after meeting fixed charges, left nearly 50,000,000 dols. for depreciation, reserve, betterments, and dividend upon Common stock, which got 2 per cent. The price of this stock is now about 42.

Pease and Partners, Limited.—C. P. (Birmingham).—The company is a very well-managed concern, and with the present prospects of the iron industry it is pretty safe to say that the company will do as well next year in the way of dividend as it has done this, when the deferred shares have got 8 per cent.

London and Paris Exchange.—"Anxious" (Dublin).—They are all right so long as markets are bad.

JOHN BULL IN THE COURTS.

Bad Draughtsmanship, or What?

The decision of the Court of Appeal in the case of the King v. The County Council of the West Riding of Yorkshire illustrates in a very striking way the slovenly methods of Government to which we are subjected. The West Riding of Yorkshire County Council came to the conclusion that the Education Act of 1902 did not assign public money to the teaching of religion in denominational schools, and accordingly refused to make any disbursement on account of religious education, defying the Board of Education to do its worst. That department applied for a mandamus, which was granted by the High Court, but the decision of this court has now been reversed by a majority of the Court of Appeal, the Master of the Rolls and Lord Justice Farwell being for reversal, Lord Justice Moulton dissenting. This decision of the Appeal Court is a complete vindication of the action of the people known as Passive Resisters. These men, who refused to pay the rate, were looked upon by most people as brainless faddists, or politicians "on the make"—any way, as persons violating the law, and they were rebuked by all sorts of superior people, from archbishops downwards. It is not to be supposed that most of these passive resisters were wiser as to the law than their neighbours. They simply resisted as a matter of principle, but the point we want to emphasize here is the slovenly way in which Acts of Parliament are drawn. There can be no question whatever that it was the intention of Parliament to compel local education authorities to pay the cost of religious education in voluntary schools. The avowed object of the Government which brought in the bill was to give effect to this intention; it was on this ground hotly fought by the Opposition; the two parties went to the country upon it; nobody, until now, except here and there a lawyer, ever doubted that the law gave the local authority the right to levy the cost of religious instruction in voluntary schools; the Bill which has occupied most of the time of the first session of the most powerful Ministry within living memory has been mainly concerned with getting rid of this power; and yet now, when an enterprising county council brings the matter before the courts of law, it is found that the power which the Act of 1902 was supposed to give to local authorities was not conferred, that from the Lord Chancellor and Prime Minister downwards, everybody was mistaken. Could there be anything more absurd?

Relief by Bankruptcy.

In the course of a money-lending case tried by the Lord Chief Justice last week, Lord Alverstone remarked that money-lenders know that "very often, if a man is honest, the efforts he will make to pay are extraordinary," and they trade upon that knowledge. In the particular case to which Lord Alverstone was referring, relief was given to the defendant in the sense that the interest he was required to pay was cut down by the Lord Chief Justice to 25 per cent. But Lord Alverstone's remark as to what honest men will do to keep up instalmnts due to money-lenders, and to pay off debts, is true. It would often be very much better for men so placed if they were readier to take advantage of the Bankruptcy Court. Many a man darkens half his life in trying to clear off liabilities, which he never succeeds in completely disposing of, in order to avoid a bankruptcy. He agrees to conditions of interest, and the like, which keep him in debt, whereas if he made the plunge and went to the court he would be free. It is true, of course, that a certain stigma attaches to a bankrupt, and that in certain positions it means ruin; but, putting aside such cases, it is better for both debtor and creditor to make a clean slate. If a man is honest, there is nothing to prevent his clearing off old debts after his bankruptcy; and once he does this, pays when there is no compulsion, he gets infinitely more credit for doing so than if he struggles on year after year, submitting to all sorts of worries and sacrifices to avoid bankruptcy, and more likely than not dying with the coils still round him.

Sir Edward Clarke.

Sir Edward Clarke has resigned his membership of the City Carlton Club, and sailed for South Africa. He has closed his political career, and although he says that he intends to continue his practice at the Bar, it is pretty safe to say that in future he will not be very often seen in the courts. A man who was Solicitor-General twenty years ago may well begin to think of rest from the strenuous life of a leading advocate. The rest that comes from promotion to the Bench is not likely to be Sir Edward Clarke's. When Lord Esher died he might have been Master of the Rolls, but he preferred the fuller life of the Bar and Parliament, and his chance passed. The present Government has its own men to look after. Sir Edward Clarke never ran well in harness. He was always kicking over the traces.

Misplaced Zeal.

The moral of the case of the Dartford Brewery Company v. Till and Godfrey would seem to be that a man who is greatly impressed by the mischief done by alcohol should not be a publican. In 1904 a Mr. Till took a lease of a public-house in Eynsford, and at the end of that year Mr. Godfrey, the tenant under Mr. Till, caused to be put up in the house a notice in the following terms:—

> "On and after December 10th no person will be served with refreshments in this house except visitors staying at the hotel and their guests, and no person will be served with alcoholic liquor more frequently than once on any morning, afternoon, or evening of any week day."

Not unnaturally, the brewery company to whom the house belonged, and whose business it is to sell alcoholic liquor, objected to this limitation of sales, and the Court of Appeal has now found that in limiting sales in the way described the defendants went beyond their right. Apart altogether from the law of the case, an intimation of the kind savours of insult. It is not for a publican to tell his customers how much they may drink, provided they do not drink more than they can carry.

The Flight of the Judges.

A visitor strolling through the Law Courts on Friday last would have seen little but empty Courts. The Appeal Courts were "up," the Lord Chief Justice's Court was deserted, not a single Common Law Court was sitting. In Court No. 1 Mr. Justice Neville was an illustration of "the new broom," and Mr. Justice Warrington was hearing a case, but, with the exception of these two Chancery Judges, the Courts were closed. The 12th is on Sunday, and the Courts could not sit on Sunday, and the 11th is Saturday, and perhaps it was not worth while to sit on a half-holiday, but one would have thought that on the 10th the Judges, faced by an exceptionally heavy list of arrears—Judges who were about to take nearly three months' holiday—would have contrived to give a day's work. In one sense it is a small matter, but not in another. There seems to the lay mind something a little puerile in this schoolboy eagerness on the part of Judges to get away from work.

LEGAL ANSWERS.

David (Kennington).—The landlord's power of distress covers the goods you mention.

E. G. (Cricklewood).—Your reversion is vested. Apply to one of the reversionary interest societies in London.

L. (King's Norton).—It must be stamped within fourteen days. There is a penalty, unless the authorities at Somerset House remit it.

Bullock (St. Just).—You are bound by the terms of the guarantee. We see nothing in the facts stated that release you.

Isaac (Brussels).—The company has power to convert the shares into share certificates to bearer. Apply to the secretary.

Walters (Stroud).—You are liable under the specific wording of the covenant in the lease to carry out the new scheme of drainage.

S. T. (Blandford).—Debts must first be paid; then the widow will take one-third and the remaining two-thirds will be divided amongst the children.

Bond (Hereford).—Default has been made, and you had better apply to the court to appoint a receiver, and to have your security realised by sale of the property.

Sidney (Henley).—If you can prove that the dog was vicious, and that the fact was in the knowledge of the owner, you can recover. Quiet inquiry will be of great assistance to you.

McG. (Blairgowrie).—The surviving trustee can appoint another person to act with him in the place of the dead trustee. You should call upon him to do so, and no doubt he will fall in with your views.

N. (Coldstream).—The debenture you have sent us is a first charge upon the undertaking of the company, but ranks equally with others of the same issue. We would advise you to consult other holders first.

O. L. (Cirencester).—Send in your claim under the fire policy. The office will provide you with the usual printed form. The circumstances you mention are covered by the policy, and the office will compensate you for the loss.

OUR BANKRUPTCY LAWS.

No. 1.

Our recent comments on the present Bankruptcy system in England have drawn attention to the need of some drastic reforms in that system, and a brief survey of the legislation on the subject may help to indicate the lines on which such necessary reforms should be based.

We have already pointed out that in no other civilised country is this question dealt with in so unjust and oppressive a manner as in England. The vagaries of the English Legislature with regard to the Bankruptcy Law are incomprehensible.

Bankruptcy Acts, 1832 to 1869.

In 1832 and 1842 Acts of Parliament were passed for establishing Courts of Bankruptcy in London and the principal provincial centres. These Courts were manned with a staff of Commissioners, Registrars, Official Assignees, etc., and, prior to 1861, dealt only with the bankruptcy of "traders," the Insolvent Debtors' Court dealing with non-traders and their relief from the rigours of the laws relating to imprisonment for debt. In 1861 both traders and non-traders were brought within the purview of the Bankruptcy Courts. The Insolvent Debtors' Court was abolished and imprisonment for debt was *nominally* swept away.

By the Act of 1861 Official Assignees were retained, but their numbers were reduced, and some of their functions were relegated to (unpaid) creditors' assignees, in other words, to the solicitors acting in the proceedings. About this time professional accountants were coming to the front, and they were naturally anxious to get rid of Official Assignees altogether, and secure for themselves the remunerative business of winding up bankrupt and insolvent estates. Moved thereto by them, the trading community agitated, very shortly after the passing of the 1861 Act, for the abolition of Official Assignees. A Royal Commission was appointed, and reported in 1864 that the Act of 1861 was a "costly failure," while the Scotch system of administration (where the work was done by accountants acting as judicial factors and trustees) was a "practical success." Consequent on this report, an Act was passed in 1869, by which the Courts of Bankruptcy were swept away and the Commissioners, Registrars, and Official Assignees were pensioned off. The judicial functions of the Court (except in London) were transferred to the county courts, while the administrative work fell into the hands of accountants as paid receivers and trustees in bankruptcy. An officer called the Comptroller in Bankruptcy was appointed to look after the conduct and accounts of these accountant-trustees.

Liquidation by Arrangement.

By a slip in the Act of 1869 the functions of the comptroller were limited to the supervision of trustees in bankruptcy, and did not extend to the far larger number of trustees under liquidations. This distinction requires a word or two of explanation. Under the Acts 1832 to 1861 petitions for adjudication of bankruptcy could be filed either by creditors or by debtors themselves. The Act of 1869 limited the right of petition for bankruptcy adjudication to creditors, but a debtor in difficulties had the power to petition for "liquidation by arrangement," under which proceeding, if certain majorities of creditors accepted a composition or other arrangement, bankruptcy was avoided and the matter was wound up outside the Court by a trustee appointed by the creditors. That the mercantile community approved of this system of administration is shown by the fact that liquidations by arrangement or composition under the Act became, in practice, four or five times as numerous as adjudications of bankruptcy.

By the omission in the Act above referred to, the trustees under these arrangements, however, escaped supervision and audit of their accounts by the comptroller, and this omission called for amendment. But by the time the matter was ripe for Parliamentary intervention Mr. Chamberlain appeared on the scene. He occupied the position of President of the Board of Trade, and saw in the demand for amendment of the 1869 Act an opportunity for increasing the importance of that Board by creating a number of official appointments, the patronage of which would rest with himself as President. Hence

The Bankruptcy Act, 1883.

which brought into existence an army of official receivers, nearly *ten times* as numerous as the old official assignees, who had been condemned in 1864 as "costly failures." A large department of permanent officials was also established at the Board of Trade to look after these official receivers and audit their accounts and those of the creditors' trustees. Of the official receivers, some were paid by salaries ranging from £500 to £2,000 a year, while others were paid by fees regulated by the number of cases dealt with in their respective districts.

Fees and Expenses.

To raise revenue for payment of the salaries and fees of these officials and for the cost of the supervisory establishment at Whitehall (headed by an Inspector-General at a salary of £1,500 a year), heavy fees were levied on bankrupt estates, including such irritating and obnoxious imposts as a stamp of the value of 1s. upon every proof of debt lodged by creditors, who were thus taxed before they were allowed to participate in the remnants of assets remaining for distribution after the sweating process of "costs, charges, and expenses." A creditor desirous of proceeding in bankruptcy against a debtor has to find £5 for stamp on petition and £5 "for deposit with official receiver" before he can move. Even the unfortunate bankrupt, before he can apply for his discharge, must find a sum for fees varying from £2 to £10 or more, according to the number of his creditors. How is an honest bankrupt who has given up everything he possesses to his creditors, to find such a sum? Is it any wonder that *only 20 per cent.* of the bankrupts adjudicated under Mr. Chamberlain's Act ever apply for a discharge? But on this point we shall comment more fully under the heading of "Discharge in Bankruptcy." Even with all the contributions levied on the assets of bankrupts' estates, the cost of the administrative machinery introduced by Mr. Chamberlain could not be met, but to make matters *appear* better than they really are, there is annually brought into an account issued by the Treasury the *imaginary* interest *which would have accrued upon the enormous bankruptcy funds accumulated under the old Bankruptcy Acts, had not such funds been annexed* by Mr. Robert Lowe (when Chancellor of the Exchequer), to assist him in *meeting the Alabama claims* without extra taxation. The funds so annexed amounted to nearly two millions sterling, and at the same time no less than five millions of Chancery Court funds were appropriated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Undoubtedly the oppressive taxes now levied on the depleted carcases of bankrupt estates are far heavier than they were under the Act of 1861—the Act which was condemned in 1864 as a "costly failure." Stronger language is needed in this respect with regard to the Act of 1883. Not only is it a "costly failure," it is also in its operation unjust, oppressive and torturing. Strange that the commercial community have stood it so long—they would not have done so had they not discovered a way of evading the Act and steering clear of the Court and its exactions by means of private deeds of arrangement.

(To be continued.)

LABOUR AND THE LEGISLATURE.

By Ben Tillett.

Can one believe one's senses? Labour in the Cabinet, labour in the Council Chamber. Virile, strident, aggressive, alert, with a determination to achieve—these are the new, great human forces permeating an atmosphere and a chamber in which the best and the worst of human qualities have played their greatest or basest parts. Here the comprehensive oratory of a Burke gave off eloquence, imagination, diction; all the splendours and beauty of our mother tongue. The brilliance of a Sheridan, the masterful sanity of a Fox, the big brain, great-hearted and most human of the Tribunes, joined issue with a Pitt, in whom intellectual maturity united with physical youth. Pitt's persistency and high character, his commanding dignity, the sonorous elegance of language, indicative of high resolve, undiminished by the brutal glories of victory, undaunted by the terrible catastrophe of defeat. Our mother-Parliament, which has housed the greatest and the least, the noblest and the meanest of our countrymen, in all its pomp and glory, in the majesty of its intellectual riches, never surpassed in achievement or promise the last Session.

If the mundane and practical have taken the place of evanescent brilliance with which wild genius, in wanton mood and witchery, startles and amuses us, it is all the more creditable and useful in having actualities grappled with.

The aftermath of prudence, following on the orgie of rapine, war, and waste, was a revolt not only against supineness and brutal guilt; in comparison making Sikes a saint, and Nero a hero: blood-lust giving way to wiser and more humane statesmanship. In that change, in this glorious revolution and revulsion, labour has played a strong hand.

Wherever labour has been intelligently organised, whenever its voice has been lifted, it spoke against the "organised hypocrisies" of vested interests. That such a Session could be possible is the most hopeful of all the rewards coming to some of us, after nearly a generation of toil, in the face of calumny, gibe, and corruption. The game of politics is now a simpler game, with more players, the people more and more want the cards on the table—hence the alacrity of departments to furnish this, that, and the other particular, the urbane minister to deferentially acquiesce in supplying minutest details. And labour has wrought this change; it has added direct language to the methods of debate, abrupt and blunter, possibly, than heroes of philosophic doubts; it has yet contributed the lucid statement, in dignity of appeal, in power of invective; the sturdiest and most robust element contributing to restore to the nation a confidence in its legislators.

We are not out of the forest as yet, but I venture to assert that no previous Session of our own or any other nation's Legislature ever grappled with or assured domestic legislation of so drastic a character. I use the term "drastic" by comparison; very few Legislatures ever really have tackled domestic and social reform at all. Although the outcome of the Session will not effect a revolution, it is still so useful that one has reason to feel thankful about the whole business. A matter which has had but little notice in the Press, but is of the most vital importance to workers, has been inaugurated by the Premier, in appointing a Joint-Committee of heads of Government Departments, with an equal number of Parliamentary (Trades Congress) committeemen, to decide any matter of industrial dispute which Government employees are subject to. The Postmaster-General is also to be congratulated for taking into his confidence representatives of the Service. Some vacillation and ambiguity is manifest over the Disputes Bill—a weakness deplorable in face of other good work done by the Government.

The weakness is all the more lamentable because of the definite claims of labour throughout. On education, compensation to injured workpeople, feeding of children, unemployment, unhealthy and dangerous trades, more energetic and numerical factory inspection, vigorous consideration has been shown. Some progress has been made, but the autumnal session will warrant our jubilation, if present signs indicate sincerity.

But the *personnel* of the Labour Party will satisfy interest in political gossip. In the usages of the House, its customs and traditional order, the Labour members have shown a wonderful adaptability. But while they have been a shock to the most fastidious of fussy incompetents, they have ingratiated themselves with the best elements of the Assembly by their downrightness and sincerity. In ability and political intuition they have at one bound gained both confidence and place. In debate the briefness of "sweetness and light" has characterised their contributions; lacking prolixity they have made up in solid, practical advices—for their defects of ornate and dialectical spufflings.

In the development of the reforms I have indicated the commonsense and business readiness of the Labour members have been put to the test.

John Burns is more energetic and ambitious than ever, riper and more determined in counsel. His later contribution to the unemployed question has done credit to his experience; one only wishes that something in keeping with the immensity of the great problem could be tackled by a Government really in earnest to serve and save the country from economic calamity. Arthur Henderson and Shackleton seem to have been among the most levelheaded and persistent of the party managers. O'Grady has literally "nailed his colours" to the mast. There is a deal of gentleness and emotion mixed in the big man, but his courage has been deft and his work well timed.

Ward, if anything, has been painfully the politician, but his assiduity, his quick grasp of essentials, are all the makings of a really great man.

Hardie, in a difficult position, has won considerable respect from a group not well versed in "kow towing"; he has done the best work of his life this session, the "nigger" incident notwithstanding.

Ramsey Macdonald, ambitious, rich, blessed with an accomplished helpmate, eager, has reached a Parliamentary level of great promise.

Jowett, one of the most conscientious and capable of the Labour members, if not flaunting his deeds, is doing useful work.

Steve Walsh, the great, little man of the party, has done good work, and is quite a parliamentarian. His amendments on the Compensation Bill showed, not only quick wit, but a parliamentary adeptness which has not only compelled good results, but has won good opinions from opponents.

Seddon has been a champion for the shop assistants. Will Thorne, as bluff as burly, has made sturdy battle for the starving kiddies and the out-o'-works and helpless. The 38,000,000 population of workers or servers of the community have in this session received more attention than at any other time in the history of Parliaments, and the new spirit may be assessed to the Labour Party more than any other. This may sound boastful, but at least the lack of political flunkeyism nowadays is due to the sturdy, the independent, spirit of those who believe in the gospel of "each for all, and all for each," as against privilege and flunkeydom, in the work of the statesman. In that seething of passions, below the urbane, one element is primal in its belief of right, and that element will be the Labour Party standing for all that is sane, true, and fair in John Bull's legislative fights.

Dear Sir, or Madam, or Miss, or Master—

I am so glad you like my paper. May I send you half a dozen stamped post-cards, all ready just to be addressed to some of your friends, telling them to take it in?

Yours very faithfully,

John Bull.

AMONG THE BOOKS.

By Frank Harris.

"Mr. Upton Sinclair's Confession."

Now that the terrible story of the Chicago slaughter-houses has made Upton Sinclair famous and given his name to the million, everything that he writes, or has written, will be read with eagerness. Naturally enough, therefore, Mr. William Heinemann, with his keen instinct for what will sell, has just published the immature firstling of Upton Sinclair's talent, which is entitled "The Journal of Arthur Stirling." Arthur Stirling is a cable-car conductor, who saves a few dollars in order to give up his work as a conductor and begin his work as a poet. He wants to write a poem called "The Captive," in blank verse, and this Journal is the story of the birth-pangs, and then of the vain efforts he makes to get an American publisher to produce "The Captive." He has no success, however, and at the end drowns himself in the Hudson River. The book is the first book of a very young man; but perhaps none the worse for that; youth is usually sincere, and this is a confession in its frank self-revealing.

Mr. Sinclair's Conceit.

The author has his share of conceit; he dreams of the "Prometheus Bound" and the "Prometheus Unbound," and the "Samson Agonistes," and swears that there shall be a fourth great world-poem, "The Captive." For, after all, "this life of ours is a death-grapple, and whether you call the enemy Chaos or Evil, or Circumstance, it lies about you, pins you; you grip it, you close with it, all your days you toil with it; you shape it into systems, you make it live and laugh and sing." This journal is a little mad because it is entirely sincere; it is so sincere, indeed, that at times it becomes somewhat provincial. There is a scent of America in it all, and the author has given a picture of street-life in America in a rapid impressionist way. The description is a little exaggerated, but so is the reality:

"Bang! bang! Look out of the way there, you fool! Use Casey's Corn Cure! Extry! Extry! 'Evening Slop-Bucket and Swill-Barrel,' six o'clock edition! And it was at seventy-two and the market. Cab! Cab! Try Jones's little Five-cent Cigars! Brown's Elite Tonsorial and Shaving Parlours! Have you seen Lucy Legs in the High Kicker? The 'Daily Hullabaloo' says—— Shine, boss? But she wouldn't cut it on the bias, because she thought—— Read the 'Evening Slop-Bucket!' Five hundred million copies sold every year! We rake all the mud-gutters, and it only costs you one cent! The 'Slop-Bucket' is the paper of the people! Move along, young man."

American Provincialism.

This is the good part of Mr. Sinclair's provincialism; the bad part of his provincialism is that he will judge you everything in heaven and earth and not a few things with most unrighteous judgment. Here is a specimen of a judging which is not entirely unrighteous nor provincial, but distinctly American: "Is there any author in the world more vulgar than Macaulay, unless it be Gibbon, or possibly Chesterfield?" Children are apt to detest their parents' offences against good taste. And here is a specimen of most provincial and unrighteous judgment: "I have been studying some of the French novelists—some of Maupassant yesterday. What a strange creature is a Frenchman! A nervous, hysterical, vain, diseased creature!

"The Gallic disease!" Let that be a phrase.

"The Gallic disease is this: to see only one thing in life, to know only one purpose, to understand only one pleasure; to have every road lead to that, every thought, every phrase. To know that every character in a book is thinking it; to know that every man who is introduced is looking for a woman! And that as soon as he finds her, they must forthwith—whatever be their age, rank, character, and position at the moment—begin to burn with unclean desires!

"That is what one might call the *convention* of French fiction."

Well, the convention of English and American fiction is love of adventure, and love of adventure, as a motive, is more puerile even than passion and in no sense more worthy. But Mr. Sinclair's quick, vivid impressionability and superb self-confidence prevent him seeing himself as others see him: he is a creature of revolt and not of reflection; but he does his best to think. He cannot understand "Balzac's fondness for things," and he goes on: "I put the book down and spent an hour of perplexity. I fear I am a very narrow person in my sympathies and understandings. Why should a man care about *things*? About all sorts of houses, and furniture, and pictures, and clothes, and jewels?

"I can understand a man's caring about love and joy and aspiration. But things! I can understand a child's caring about things, or a fool's caring; I see millions of such; but an artist? A thinker? A *man*?"

But had Balzac never cared for pictures, and furniture, and clothes, he would never have been the great artist he was; he would never have written those extraordinary novels, "Cousin Pons," "La Recherche de l'Absolu," or "Un Chef d'œuvre Inconnu."

In such judging as this Mr. Upton Sinclair shows us his limitations. And, of course, his style re-pictures him; it is slap-up, slap-dash, vivid, exaggerated, hasty, incorrect, destined by its faults as much as by its virtues to popularity, immediate popularity and success, but hardly more than that. Still, the book is an interesting book, for it is a sincere book; it is full of passionate, hot anger—a scream of revolt.

"The Scream of Revolt."

Now let us study the revolt, and see what it means to Mr. Arthur Stirling, or, rather, to Mr. Upton Sinclair, for the book is, as I have said, soul-revealing—a confession. Mr. Sinclair, then, wants to be free in order to be an artist, and by freedom he means that he wants the world to give him two hundred dollars a year (or £40 a year) for three years, and he will then be free to write the masterpiece that everyone is to accept. This is his quarrel with the world, that it will not do this; and as this quarrel is the quarrel of most young artists, let us consider it and the reasonableness of it and whether the world is to blame for its treatment of young artists or not.

There is, be it remarked, something impersonal in this revolt; it is not all selfish. Mr. Sinclair says: "I am desperate as I write, I look ahead and I can see only ruin, and not ruin for myself—I don't mind that—but ruin for my art."

But who is to judge of his "art"? Bad art, even Mr. Sinclair would admit is valueless, not worth even two hundred dollars a year. The artist clearly must not be the judge in this matter, and so we are driven back to the market as judge, and we must all admit that the market is an execrable judge, and we should all try our best to minimise the evils of its misjudging; above all, try to increase our reverence for artists and for their work. It is quite clear, for example, that we think too much of soldiers and politicians; we pay the soldiers and politicians much above their merits, and artists much below their merits. But all this is slowly righting itself as the world grows in wisdom, and Mr. Sinclair scarcely teaches us how to hasten the golden age which is coming.

It would be quite easy, I think, to prove that this revolt is most intense and most bitter in the smallest men and weakest artists. I have no doubt it is true that the very highest in our time shrink from the unrestrained competition of modern industrialism; they loathe its brutal self-seeking and its robbery; sometimes, indeed, they leave life rather than face it. But the man, as a rule, who rages against the age most fiercely is the man who desires its applause and its flesh-pots, and who for all the good he does as an artist and writer might as well be a Chicago grocer or pork butcher.

Mr. Sinclair does not wish to be judged on this level. In a preface he begs a friend if he should live when he (Arthur Stirling) is dead "to remember the young artist" who longs for excellence as "a lion longs for his food." What he has written, he says, "is literature, and not journalism." But here we are back at the crux again, for what he has written is, I believe, journalism, and not literature. "The Jungle" is journalism, and the end of it is bad journalism.

The Writer's Proper Payment.

But let us take it that the man is capable of writing literature; even then the cry of revolt, which is "The Journal of Arthur Stirling," does not seem to me very reasonable, for the reward proper to literature, indeed to high art of any kind, is enduring reputation and not cash, and it is unreasonable, it is stupid, to expect cash for it.

The man who sells bacon expects to make money, but he doesn't expect renown, and if a man sets himself to do literature he is writing for fame, and should not expect cash; he is then not writing for the men and women of the day, but for the half-dozen in all the generations yet unborn who will appreciate fine work; he should not expect to be paid by the men and women of to-day, because he is not writing for them. Milton was well paid when he got five pounds for "Paradise Lost"; he appealed to perhaps twenty people in his own time; he won immortal fame through the book and should have been well content therewith.

THE CORELLI SOCIETY.

By Edgar Turner.

A day or two ago I called on Blanco Watson, the eminent literary critic. I found him seated at the piano, singing a music-hall song. His hair was disordered, his collar unbuttoned, and his eyeglass broken. He nodded as I entered, but took no further notice of me until he had finished the song. Then he jumped up, staggered across the room to where I was standing, and, clapping me on the shoulder, said—

"Hullo, old Education Bill! How are you?"

"Blanco Watson," I replied sternly, "you're intoxicated."

"Yes, I'm intoxicated," he said, with a chuckle. "Still we won't talk about it."

"Oh, yes, we will. What is the meaning of it? Only last week you told me that you never drank before dinner."

"It's not drink," he protested. "It's this."

He picked up a bulky volume from the table, and handed it to me. I quoted the title aloud—

"The Treasure of Heaven: A Romance of Riches."

"That's it," he exclaimed, with another chuckle. "'The Treasure of Heaven,' by Marie Corelli. Five hundred and sixty-four closely printed pages, bound in red and gold. And I've read them all this morning. Of course, I'm intoxicated. If there had been another dozen pages, I should have had delirium tremens. Marie Corelli is as dangerous as a motor-car, and ought to be regulated like one. Twenty miles an hour, you know, and two brakes. Otherwise she may in the end kill some poor literary man outright, and have to compensate his agent, his publisher, his wife, and his children."

And as he said this he sat down in an easy chair and motioned me to take another near it. I did so, and then remarked—

"I also have read 'The Treasure of Heaven.' I like it."

"You always were a little bit eccentric," said Blanco Watson, with a shrug of his shoulders.

"It is not a question of being eccentric," I began.

"No," he interrupted, picking up a newspaper, and quoting, or pretending to quote, from it. "It is a question of a 564-page farago of religion, 'smart' society, bucolicism, metaphysics, ethics, politics, and socialistic ideals, which, for stage heroics, unbridled sentimentality, and linguistic gorgeousness in general, probably surpasses all previous performances since the invention of printing."

"There is a certain amount of truth in that summary," I said. "Still it is not quite fair. I wonder why it is that the reviewers are generally so unkind to Marie Corelli? Yes, and why she sits down so patiently under their abuse? If I were in her place, I should make an example of one of them."

Blanco Watson laughed, and said—

"Thereby hangs a tale. Listen, and I will tell it to you. As you suggest, the reviewers, almost without exception, slate Marie Corelli's books. Some do it with a trowel, and some with a spade. The worst reviews of all used to be those which appeared in a certain weekly paper over the curious signature 'Rameroc.' They were outrageously brutal. Again and again when I read them I wondered why Marie—I beg her pardon, I mean Miss Corelli—did not instruct Messrs. Lewis and Lewis to institute a libel suit against 'Rameroc.' Even the most intelligent of juries would, it seemed to me, have made him pay something. And if, by chance, the jury had been composed of members of the Corelli Society, the damages might easily have run into millions sterling."

"The Corelli Society!" I exclaimed. "I didn't know there was such a society."

"Oh, yes—it is part of the tale I am telling you. It has been in existence for years. Its birth was simultaneous with that of the seventh edition of 'The sorrows of Satan.' Now it has more than four hundred members, and is quoted on the Stock Exchange. The Browning Society, the Aristotelian Society, and the Shakespeare Society are trifling affairs compared with it. The committee consists of two duchesses, three lady parish councillors, and four lady's maids. The offices are situate at—but that doesn't matter."

"No," I agreed, "that doesn't matter. Go on."

"Rameroc's review of Miss Corelli's last romance, 'God's Good Man,' was simply shocking. He abused it in each of the four and twenty ways in which it is possible to abuse a book. He quoted Latin and Greek against it. He cursed it by bell and candle. He invited the Vatican and the London Police to put it on their respective black lists. And, in conclusion, he advised Miss Corelli to betake herself to a nunnery, and count beads for the rest of her unnatural life.

"The two duchesses, the three lady parish councillors, and the four lady's maids, constituting the committee of the Corelli Society, were furious when they read the review. At their next meeting they discussed it at length, and finally passed a resolution to the effect that, in the cause of literature, and for the progress of civilisation, Rameroc must be killed. The manner of his death was not fixed. But the artistic suggestion of one of the lady's maids that he should be gradually steam-rollered found most favour.

"On the day after the meeting the committee left London, in order to lay their project before Marie Corelli, who, as the Grand Perpetual President of the Society, is always consulted on important matters concerning it. It was, I think, May-time in England. The last breath of a long winter had blown its final farewell across the hills—the last frost had melted from the broad low-lying fields—and so on—and so on in the correct Corellian canter. At any rate, whatever the weather and whatever the month, at about four o'clock in the afternoon the committee arrived at Stratford-on-Avon, where, as you know, the Treasure of the Circulating Libraries lives, and were received by her in the Shakespearian room of her delightfully ornate house—a true romance of riches. She gave them tea and cake, and then asked what was the particular business on which they had come down to see her.

"The elder of the two duchesses explained in a few well-chosen words. Miss Corelli trembled and grew pale. This was generally attributed to her feelings of indignation against Rameroc.

"'Then you have all decided that he must die?' she murmured.

"'Yes, all,' they replied in one fierce shout.

"'And who—who is to kill him?' she asked.

"'One of us ten,' replied the duchess.

"'But there are only nine of you.'

"'Oh, we count you too, dear,' said the duchess. 'You see it is an affair for the officers of the Society. And, of course, you are an officer just as each member of the committee is. Now how shall we settle which of us is to be the one? By casting lots, I suppose?'

"The rest of the committee agreed, and nine blank slips, and one with the name of Rameroc written on it, were prepared and placed in a vase. Miss Corelli, still pale and trembling, watched anxiously. The duchess picked up the vase, and offered it to her with the words—

"'You, as President, shall draw first.'

"Twice Miss Corelli stretched out her hand to the vase, and twice stopped at the edge. Then, with a desperate effort, she plunged it in, and caught hold of a slip. Slowly she unfolded it. She read the name Rameroc. It was the fatal slip. She was to kill him.

"The duchess put down the vase, and said—

"'It is well. May his death be swift and sure.'

"For some moments Miss Corelli stood silent and motionless. Then she folded her arms, threw back her head, and cried—

"'I rejoice, ladies, that I have been elected to this high task. I am glad and proud to be the one chosen to put an end to the career of Rameroc. I shall have

no fear in carrying out my appointed duty to the letter. As has been suggested, I shall be swift and sure. Ladies, it is your desire that I should kill Rameroc. You have resolved upon it. You are sure that his death will benefit literature. Be it so! I am ready to obey! I will kill him at once!—here and now! I am Rameroc!'

"As she finished, she snatched a hat-pin from the table, and turned the point towards her heart. The rest of the company stared at her in surprise, terror, and confusion.

"'Yes,' she repeated, 'I will kill him at once!—here and now! I—I am Rameroc!'"

Blanco Watson paused. I looked at him impatiently, and exclaimed—

"Go on. I know she didn't kill herself. But what happened? What did the committee do?"

"First they disarmed her of the hat-pin," replied Blanco Watson. "Then they passed a new resolution, censuring Rameroc, but sparing his life. And then they cried—yes, cried bitterly. But Miss Corelli managed to pacify them. The elder of the two duchesses, however, wanted a lot of coaxing before she would consent to continue her membership of the Society.

"I don't wonder at it," I remarked. "What reasons did Miss Corelli give for posing as Rameroc and writing those abusive reviews of her own books?"

"First that they were a good advertisement—made the public regard her as a sort of oppressed Adolf Becky Sharp, you know. Then she pleaded the Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde business. One part of her mind, it seems, insists on creating luxurious novels. The other part does not approve of them, and insists on expressing its opinion. Which is the Dr. Jekyll part, and which the Mr. Hyde? I really don't know. All I know is that I have read 'The Treasure of Heaven' to-day, and am intoxicated. Five hundred and sixty-four closely printed pages, with a frontispiece portrait of the author and a dear little dedication! What more do you want for six shillings? 'The Treasure of Heaven: A Romance of Riches'! Sixty miles an hour, and no brakes! Yes, I am intoxicated. I shall now proceed to sing another song. You can stop if you like, or you can go."

I went. Blanco Watson is a very good literary critic, but a very bad singer.

SHAMS.

ED. C. LOVEGROVE AND CO. AGAIN.

In reference to the exposure of this firm, contained in our issue of 28th ult. by "Anti-Humbug," we have received a letter from one of our readers, who informs us that, having drawn the attention of Lovegrove and Co. to our remarks, he received the following reply from them:—

13, Sise Lane, London, E.C.,
August 2nd, 1906.

Dear Sir,—We have your favour of the 1st, and also enclosure from "John Bull."

We have only one business, and that is this one. We have no connection of any kind either with H. Marshall and Co., or Fraser, Grieg, and Co., and this we can prove by our bankers. We have never had *any interest of any kind*, in either of the businesses mentioned above.

If you will kindly read the article again, which we beg to return you, you will find that the man who wrote this article, evidently knows very little about Stock Exchange business; as he quoted South-Eastern Deferred at 115¾-16¼, when South-Eastern Deferred are only 50-½.

With respect to his remark that we never buy stock from clients, we have several clients who have sold stocks at the current price to us, in other words, been a "Bear" of the said security; and for the last three weeks, the advices we have given have been generally in Steel Common shares; and at the time we first advised them they were quoted 34-¼, and to-day they are 42-¼.

More utter nonsense than the paragraph we have marked in blue was never written by anyone with any pretension to know anything of Stock Exchange matters. The man who wrote this article doesn't appear to know that when a security is quoted 115¾-16¼, that you can only sell at 115¾, or buy at 116¼.

If you, sir, understand the quotations you will readily see that this paragraph is the same as the rest of the article, perfectly incorrect.

You are no doubt aware that "John Bull" is a paper of about six weeks' existence, and, of course, to sell their paper, they evidently desire to write an apparently alarming article against someone or another.

On all occasions, when clients have made a profit on their bargain, they have immediately had a cheque for the difference.

We are, dear sir,
Yours faithfully,
E. C. Lovegrove & Co.

We have submitted this letter to our contributor, "Anti-Humbug," who has sent us the following comments thereon:

"Without beating about the bush, let me say at once that Lovegrove's denial that his firm masquerades as Howard Marshall and Co. and Fraser Grieg and Co. is an unmitigated faslehood. Lovegrove has been Howard Marshall and Co. for years to my own knowledge, even when he was masquerading in one of the rabbit warrens he now occupies, in other names. His address, like his *aliases*, was variously given as Mansion House Chambers, 11, Queen Victoria Street, 20, Bucklersbury, and 13, Sise Lane, each being a separate entrance to one and the same building, and he then had other fancy names. Fraser, Grieg and Co.—since my exposure, re-christened Fraser and Co.—is one of his latest *aliases*. But even if I did not know, and were unable to prove this, a glance at the literature issued by Howard Marshall and Co., Ed. C. Lovegrove and Co., and Fraser, Grieg and Co., would prove the truth of my assertion, for not only do they use a form of prospectus couched in identical language, but applicants for Lovegrove's pamphlet invariably receive one also from Howard Marshall and Co. and Fraser, Grieg and Co.

"As to Lovegrove's second paragraph, the quotation of S.E. Deferred was his own, and was only given by me in reproducing *verbatim et literatim* Lovegrove's own words.

"As regards Lovegrove's third paragraph, it is, as are all his statements, misleading; for whilst Steel Commons did rise from 34 to 42, he forgets to add that they fluctuated considerably between these figures before they gained 9 points, and that Lovegrove had many opportunities of snatching the cover of his dupes, which he, no doubt, did not forget to do.

"As regards Lovegrove's fourth paragraph, I never said what he pretends I did say.

"As regards his last paragraph, I never doubted that he paid his clients *when* they made a profit, but I maintained, and still maintain (being supported by the late Lord Chief Justice of England), that in the same ratio as his clients made profits, Lovegrove made losses, and as Lovegrove would be the first to deny that his businesses were on the brink of bankruptcy, most of his clients must have lost their money to him. The business which Lovegrove conducts would break the Bank of England in a day, if the tips he gives his customers to buy, really came off.

"Having now dealt with the comments which Lovegrove makes on a portion of my article, permit me to briefly refer to those portions which he has not noticed:—

> *Imprimis* he does not deny that he has been connected with quite a round dozen of bucket-shops, the majority of which have disappeared into the Ewigkeit.

"Secondly, he omits to notice the fact that the literature sent out by Ed. C. Lovegrove, Fraser, Grieg and Co., and Howard Marshall and Co. are couched in identical language.

"Thirdly, he does not controvert the dictum of the late Lord Chief Justice of England that

> In inverse ratio to the soundness of [the bucket-shop's] recommendations, the bucket-shop loses or makes money and the "client" makes or loses it.

"And lastly, he has not one word to say about the concluding portion of my article, where I remark—

> In effect, the bucket-shop takes up a position which is equivalent to a bookmaker saying he has information that a certain horse will win a race, and is therefore willing—in fact, anxious—to lay odds against his doing so.

"After all, it is these statements, which Lovegrove does not controvert, that matter, and not a question of what are the latest *aliases* this bucket-shop keeper has adopted, or how absurd are his stock quotations. What I aimed at in my article was to prevent readers of John Bull getting into the clutches of Lovegrove and his kidney, and even if my statements regarding his identity were incorrect, the force of my contention regarding his method of making money would not be weakened. As a matter of fact, however, every word in my original article is true, and if Mr. Lovegrove should feel at all injured in the matter, he has his remedy; for if John Bull, 'to sell their (*sic*) paper,' 'evidently desire to write an apparently alarming article against someone or another.' and do (or rather does) so recklessly invent its 'facts,' the sooner Mr. Lovegrove shows them (or is it 'it'?) up in a court of law, the better."

JOHN BULL'S OPEN POST-CARDS.

[*Owing to this being the holiday season,* John Bull *is too lazy to write any long letters, so he proposes to keep in touch with his friends by means of post-cards—more or less pictorial in their character.*]

I.

To the Marquess Townshend.

My Lord,—I beg to solicit your lordship's careful attention to the Education Bill, the Street Betting Bill, the Juvenile Smoking Bill, and other complicated measures, which will be laid before your lordship's House during the autumn. I venture to express a hope that your lordship may condescend to check these proposals with all the vigilance and perspicuity which you have already displayed in regard to your private affairs. With such men as yourself among our legislators, we do well to admire our glorious Constitution, and join in the pious ejaculation, Thank God, we have a House of Lords!—I have the honour to subscribe myself, your lordship's faithful, humble servant,

John Bull.

II.

To Messrs. Pears, Fry, Dewar, Lipton, and Co., Unlimited.

Gentlemen,—I venture to address you as admirable exponents of the Spirit of the Age—of the Age of Advertisement. When I go down to the country in trains, when I visit the uttermost parts of the sea coasts, you are there also. There is no escape from your ubiquitous presence. Some folks there are who regard you as eyesores and nuisances, but you are living exponents of the national activity, and your very vandalism may serve to hearten such as believe in the decay of industry. Though I may not always admire your artistic efforts, I like to think of you as an object-lesson in faith.—Gentlemen, your servant,

John Bull.

III.

To Thomas Beecham, Esq.

To you, Mr. Beecham, I owe the memory of a pleasant experience. It was at a certain Custom House that I was asked by a gaudy official, "Have you anything for your own personal use that has never been used before?" "Yes, I have." "Well, produce it." "I beg your pardon," said I, "but you are a very big official, and I am only one of the public. I would not presume to interfere with the exercise of your discretion. Pray search my trunks." After a long and fruitless search, during which he grew angrier and angrier, at last I relented. I produced a box of those pills, which you surely undervalue at a paltry guinea. "These," I informed him, "are for my own personal use, and have never been used before. Have one?"—Your grateful friend,

John Bull.

IV.

To Mr. Speaker Lowther.

Sir,—Having watched many of your predecessors in the Chair, I must confess that I began by being somewhat disappointed by your methods. But, in common with the rest of your boys (for we are only a great school, aren't we?), I have grown to worship you. The only doubt in my mind is whether you are quite serious. I never know whether you are joking when the question is that the words proposed to be left out stand part. However, you have earned general respect and general regard. You have acquired a reputation for fairness, even to the extent of sometimes administering necessary rebukes to Ministers. The best thing about you is that you do not often make a fuss over trifles. Where another Speaker might have provoked scenes and suspensions or embittered controversies by intervention, you have often been content to turn a deaf ear, which deserves to be compared with Nelson's blind eye. Indulgence of this kind is particularly suitable in a democratic assembly, where many members are ignorant, not merely of Parliamentary forms, but equally of the manners of gentlemen.—I am, Sir, yours affectionately,

John Bull.

V.

To the Right Hon. A. Birrell, M.P.

My dear Birrell,—I am glad that you have not altogether abandoned your habit of birrelling, or, as I prefer to call it, squirrelling. Your retort to Healy was very neat when he suggested that the Irish members should be made peers: "I should be very happy to see the hon. member in another place." No one can help liking you, for, though you try to look so solemn and misanthropic, you are really one of the kindest and most genial fellows alive. Even your sweet temper, however, must have been sorely tried when, after spending nearly the whole session upon your Education Bill, you found that the Court of Appeal had rendered it quite unnecessary. However, I dare say you will find a merry quip wherein you may conceal your vexation. Anyhow, please keep on birrelling.—Your good friend,

John Bull.

VI.

Lord Justice Farwell.

May it please your lordship,—I am free to confess (as the old Parliamentarians used to say) that when I first heard of your promotion to the Bench, I had no very great confidence in your future. We have lately seen so many weak and incompetent judges that there would have been nothing to surprise me if you had followed in their footsteps. It is true that you had been successful at the Bar, but your work was restricted to the dullest kind of litigation, and you had had no opportunity of displaying brilliancy. Moreover, you were known to your friends as a good fellow, a good sportsman, perhaps a bit of a bookworm too, but not as a Charles Russell, or a Henry Hawkins, or even a Rufus Isaacs. However, your opportunity came with your presidency of the War Stores Commission, and I am delighted to find that you have made the most of it. Permit me to congratulate you upon the tact, the commonsense, the patience, and the indefatigable perseverance which you revealed throughout a trying inquiry. If there were more men like you on the Bench, we could better afford to pass over the shortcomings of such shallows as Grantham, Lawrance, Ridley and company.—Your faithful servant,

John Bull.

MISTRESS MORN.

By Vera Canute.

I.

Over the sea came fair Mistress Morn,
  Flinging a shadow of grey o'er the earth,
Leaving the stars of the night forlorn,
Waking the poppies asleep in the corn,
  Kissing the trees till they shook with mirth.

II.

Over the hills came the red-lipped maid,
  While on the fields fell a gentle rain;
On sweet-breathed roses her hands she laid,
While the stars went out with the night, afraid,
  And the skylark called to his mate again.

III.

Fair Mistress Morn o'er the valleys came,
  And waved farewell to the drowsy moon;
She swept the grass with her gown of flame,
And called each flower by a tender name,
  Then fled to the arms of her love, the noon.

A Useful Little Book for Young People.—We have received a copy of "Hints," published at Savoy House, Strand, at the price of 2s. 6d., and written by "B. I. Z." It is brimful of useful and valuable maxims, and is calculated to save a large number of half-crowns to any purchaser who acts upon it.

Chorus: HERE WE ARE AGAIN!

MRS. DROMIO.

By Herbert Vivian.

I had not met my old friend Arthur Featherstone for some years, when I suddenly espied his familiar figure in the paddock at Ascot. I slapped him on the back, but he only rewarded me with a good-humoured stare.

"Why, Featherstone, old chap, you don't mean to say you have forgotten me," I exclaimed, with a touch of disappointment.

He was shaking with an effort to suppress some mysterious emotion. At last he answered, in those purring tones I knew so well, "My name is Featherstone, but I have never had the pleasure of meeting you."

I began to turn away in a huff, muttering, "Oh, very well! if you don't want to know me any more, I can only say I am sorry."

"Hi, young fellow!" he shouted, with uproarious laughter, "I mustn't break up old friendships. You have mistaken me for my twin brother. Come and have a drink."

"Well, this is most extraordinary," I began.

"Not at all. You are the fifth man who has made that mistake to-day. I have been accustomed to it all my life. But, now that Arthur has returned. the mistake repeats itself more frequently. I tell him he really must sacrifice himself and grow a beard."

The twin brother's name was Dick, and I soon saw a good deal, not only of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur, but of Mr. and Mrs. Dick.

My old friends were great enthusiasts about golf, and so was I. We decided to stay at a family hotel in the Surrey pine-woods, close to some very fine links. I forget whether I have mentioned that Mrs. Arthur comes of very ancient stock, and has been accustomed all her life to be treated with a good deal of deference. In the West Indies she was quite a little queen, and she had brought home with her an exaggerated idea of her own importance—though, to do her justice, it was too natural to be offensive in any way.

I shall never forget the first evening at the Silver Hall Hotel. I had noticed during dinner that we three were an object of considerable attention. There was nudging and whispering when we entered, and the excitement seemed to go on growing all through the repast. It reminded me of little explosions of gunpowder, fizzing and spluttering from table to table. Two or three heads would be placed close together. Buzz, buzz, buzz! Then those who had their backs to us would turn sharply round and stare at us with open mouths. Their expressions were anything but friendly. Some seemed indignant, some pained, some full of unctuous rectitude—all were evidently surprised. Arthur and I vainly tried to think of an explanation for this extraordinary conduct. Mrs. Arthur, wearing her most regal expression, appeared utterly unconcerned. If I had not known her very well, I could almost have believed that she had noticed nothing.

We took our coffee in a sort of lounge. There was one place vacant on a settee, where a cheerful-looking young lady was chattering with a young man. A little bag of needlework lay on the vacant place. Mrs. Arthur took it up and placed it on the table, saying casually, "Will you allow me to move this?"

The young lady, who had been giggling to her friend, suddenly assumed a very forbidding expression, and ostentatiously drew away her skirts. She stared hard at Mrs. Arthur, and made no reply.

Mrs. Arthur said condescendingly, "I hope I am not disturbing you."

The girl gave an insolent shrug of the shoulders, and turned her back. Then she whispered something to the young man, who said, so that we could hear quite distinctly, "Yes, this is no place for us." They then got up and walked to the other side of the room, where they talked excitedly. I heard her say something about impudence, and the young man about "infernal cheek."

A tall, thin woman in black was now walking across the hall. The girl called to her and made some remark, with a nod in our direction. The tall lady deliberately looked round and stared at us, after which I heard her mutter something about "a brazen creature."

The plot was thickening, and I began to be interested. Something strange had evidently occurred, but what it was I had not the faintest idea. Presently Mrs. Arthur announced that she had a headache and was going upstairs. Her husband went out with me for a stroll, and I asked him whether we had unwittingly entered a private lunatic asylum.

"Oh, no," he answered, "it's only bad manners. Nobody seems to have any manners nowadays. I daresay when we get to know them we shall find them all right."

After a time we went into the smoking-room. As the door opened someone was saying, "I certainly sha'n't stay here if they do. I never heard of such monstrous bad form. The man can't be a gentleman." "And the lady?" a young man drawled from the depths of an armchair. There was a general laugh.

Then someone caught sight of us and made a hasty exclamation. The others turned round and looked at us. There was a sudden silence, and all puffed away at pipes or cigars with every appearance of embarrassment.

One thing only was certain, that we were not very welcome guests at the Silver Hall Hotel. This, however, did not particularly disturb us, so we settled ourselves in a corner, called for whisky and soda, and indulged in West Indian reminiscences. The embarrassment of the others continued for some time. They were evidently listening to every word we said, and watching us narrowly, though furtively. The whole thing began to get upon my nerves, and I could see that Arthur also felt irritated.

Then the sleek young man began to address the company:

"Something similar once happened at a place where I was staying in America. It was not a conventional place like this, and I was surprised to find people resent it. But they did, by Jove! One fellow actually suggested lynching the couple. In the end a committee was formed, and it was decided to take all their luggage and throw it into the yard. However, the culprits got wind of it, and made themselves scarce in the nick of time."

"What had they done?" Arthur inquired, innocently. "Virtuous indignation is rare nowadays, and these little incidents of travel are always amusing."

The young man stared at him, blew a smoke ring, and went on talking to the others. "Of course, theirs was an aggravated case. I think embezzlement, assault and battery, if not manslaughter, were thrown in. But in this case I think we should take action without those aggravations. After all, it is a gross insult to our womenfolk."

"Did you hear me address you, sir?" Arthur inquired, with rising annoyance. "I have no desire to force my acquaintance upon you, but I think I have a right to a civil answer to a civil question."

"Oh! yes, I heard you," said the young man, with his exasperating drawl. Then he went on to the others, impudently ignoring Arthur, "I propose that we now resolve ourselves into a committee of inquiry. Who will volunteer to interrogate the culprit?"

Here I interposed. "Confound it all, sir," I said, "your manners seem to me very strange. My friend, Mr. Featherstone, is not accustomed to be treated in this way, and I think he is entitled to ask for an explanation."

"Well," said a fat man who was standing by the fire, "I think we are also entitled to an explanation. To begin with, when Mr. Featherstone was here a fortnight ago, he was kind enough to appreciate our society. Now, until this moment, he has not condescended to recognise any one of us."

"You are evidently labouring under some extraordinary delusion," said Arthur, with a sudden smile. "I was never here in my life before."

"What?" everyone exclaimed in a breath.

"Certainly. I was never here in my life before. I never even heard of the place until a few days ago."

"Do you mean to say that you did not play golf with me for three afternoons in succession?"

"Have you forgotten our games of cribbage every evening?"

"Were you not the man who played my wife's accompaniments?"

The questions followed each other in rapid succession. Arthur was now evidently enjoying himself hugely. "Never," he replied with emphasis.

No one said a word, but I could note looks of blank incredulity all round the room. Arthur nudged me and whispered:

"This is delightful. Dick must have been here. Only why they should be so much annoyed, I haven't the ghost of an idea. Don't say a word. We will get some fun out of them before we confess." Then, turning to the young man who had started the trouble, he said: "I hope, sir, that I am not to conclude that you doubt my word?"

For some moments the young man only stared, and I thought he was going to ignore Arthur again. This might have been dangerous. But at last he opened his lips and drawled: "You are not to conclude, sir, that I doubt the evidence of my senses."

Arthur kept his temper wonderfully, and contented himself with saying: "Well, I hope you will have the grace to apologise to me when you are convinced of your mistake."

"With all my heart, when—and *if*—I am convinced that you were not here a fortnight ago."

"That is good enough for me," said Arthur, smiling; "now, gentlemen, I will leave you to make what you can of this mystery." Then he motioned me out of the room, and urged me to keep it up as long as possible. "My dear chap," he said, "we should have been bored to death in this hole but for this little incident. Now we can have some sport at the expense of these bounders for several days, if not for the rest of our stay."

I shook my head, but he went off to bed in his merriest mood. Now I look back on the incident, I am astounded that neither of us thought of the very simple explanation for the unpleasant demeanour of our fellow guests.

As it turned out, the opportunities for extending the joke were speedily restricted. We played golf all the next morning, and came in so late to lunch that we had the dining-room to ourselves. As we passed through the lounge, we noticed that the boarders were assembled in full force, but there was an entire absence of the whispers and stares with which we had been favoured on the previous evening. On our return from lunch, however, we were the objects of a demonstration which had evidently been carefully prepared. Some thirty ladies immediately rose and stalked away upstairs in silence. "Where are they all going, do you think?" said Mrs. Arthur, without much interest, as she touched a handbell for her coffee.

When the waiter came he approached Arthur mysteriously, and murmured in his ear: "Beg pardon, sare, but ze landlord 'e want to see you in his office."

"If he wants to see me, he can find me here. Now, hurry up and get our coffee."

The waiter came back almost immediately and without coffee. "Sare," said he, "ze landlord say it is particular private. Ver' important. Must see you at once in his office."

"Must he, indeed? Let me remind you that we are waiting for our coffee."

No coffee came, and, after about ten minutes, Arthur's curiosity got the better of him, and he walked off to the office. I wanted to go with him, but he told me I should only spoil sport. Mrs. Arthur wanted to know what this sport was, but when I told her that some people had mistaken him for Dick, she lost all interest.

Arthur told me about his interview with the landlord later on. It began with a mere notice to quit, but Arthur insisted upon an explanation. The landlord said: "I am very sorry, but I have to think of my business. If you do not go, all the other people will go, and my season will be spoilt."

"If I do not go, all the other people will go! What on earth do you mean?"

"Well, sir, if only the lady will go, I daresay I can make it all right. You see, sir, the ladies are easily scandalised."

"Scandalised! Pray what about? And what has all this got to do with me? Who is the lady who has got to go in order to pacify them?"

"Why, sir, the lady who is with you."

"The lady who is with me! Do you mean my wife?"

The landlord shrugged his shoulders deprecatingly. "The lady must go," was all he said.

Arthur was now losing his temper. "Be very careful what you say. You have gone too far. If you do not want me to smash your head, you will at once explain what you mean. But have a care, or you will find yourself in for a libel action as well as for a broken head."

The man was now on his guard. He protested that he meant nothing, that he appreciated the patronage of Mr. and Mrs. Featherstone, and so forth. He admitted that a landlord was bound by law to provide accommodation and refreshment for man and beast. (There was a slight emphasis on the word beast, which nearly provoked a blow, but there was no certainty of a double meaning. However, Arthur let it pass.) But, the landlord wound up, he was entitled to decide where his guests should be served, and he requested that, if Mr. and Mrs. Featherstone remained, they should take all their meals in their sitting-room. Arthur made several vain efforts to elicit an explanation, and finally announced that he would leave that afternoon. He added that he should take care that none of his friends ever visited a place where he had suffered so much discourtesy.

Meanwhile Mrs. Arthur had gone upstairs, and Tom Jackson, an old friend of mine, strolled into the hall. He had only arrived that morning, but seemed already well primed with the gossip of the place.

"I say," he began, "have you heard about all the storm in a teapot which is now raging here? There's a chap called Featherstone, a slave-driver or something, I am told."

"I know him very well," I said.

"You know him, do you? Well, then, I wish you would talk to him, and explain to him that he is no longer in his slave-driving island. Polygamy may be all very well among black people, but folks wont stand it over here?"

"My good man, you seem to have gone off your head, like the rest of the people in this beastly boarding-house. However, Featherstone will be back in a few minutes, and you can explain to him what you mean."

"Heavens, no! It's no concern of mine. I only thought, in his own interests, you might like to give him a friendly hint. He was here a fortnight ago with his wife."

"He was not, as a matter of fact. But if he had been, I don't see——"

"No, but now he is here with another wife, and the old cats don't like it."

At last the whole affair was clear to me. I kicked myself for not having thought of this. Here were we planning to extract great jests from the fact that Dick had been here before. But we had forgotten all about Mrs. Dick. Poor Mrs. Arthur, with all her claims to everybody's deference, what a horrible situation for her! This was rather more than a joke. How on earth were we to clear it up and satisfy everybody? We might explain until we were blue in the face, and no one would ever believe us. Besides, all these people would go away and chatter all over the place, and who knows how far the scandal might not spread? I told my friend all the facts, and he looked very serious. At last he said: "The only thing is to get Mr. and Mrs. Dick down at once. Then you will be able to have the last laugh."

No sooner said than done. I ran down to the village, and sent them an urgent telegram imploring them to come at once. To my great relief, I received a reply in the afternoon that they would be down in time for dinner. On going up to Arthur's sitting-room I found him engaged in packing.

"What is this?" I asked.

"We are off in half an hour," he said, grimly. "All the people here are mad, and the landlord is an insolent fool." He then detailed to me what had taken place in the office.

"You must not think of going," I told him. "There has been a ridiculous mistake. You will find it all cleared up this evening."

He was terribly obstinate, but at last, by appealing to his sense of humour, I prevailed upon him to stay till after dinner. He objected that the landlord had insisted that Mrs. Arthur should dine upstairs. I told him that she could quite safely dine downstairs, and that everybody would be delighted to see her.

"Very well," he said, "you shall have your joke, but if it is at my wife's expense, I will never speak to you again."

Half an hour before dinner the lounge was absolutely crowded by nearly every man, woman, and child in the house. It was the habit to gather there before the dressing-bell rang. I sat in a corner enjoying a glass of vermouth with my friend Jackson. In came Mr. and Mrs. Dick. I shall never forget the wave of astonishment, amazement, virtuous indignation, and blank horror which passed over the assemblage. Here was an outrage, beside which Arthur's supposed misdemeanour of the last few days was a bagatelle. He had been here with his second wife to lunch, and now he turned up, calm and smiling, with his first wife to dinner.

"Talk of polygamy!" Jackson whispered in my ear.

I rose and greeted the new arrivals as though I had only parted from them a few hours ago. "A sherry and bitters, Arthur, old chap," I said solemnly to Dick, adding to his wife, "here is your old seat."

"No, I always sat over there by the window," she began, but I whispered to them to agree with everything I said.

They sat down quite unconcernedly, and Dick began to nod and smile to various men he had known last time. He even called one by his name and challenged him to play cribbage after dinner. There was no answer, but a black frown.

Dick was somewhat perplexed, but never dreamed for an instant that he was the object of this demonstration. "Hullo!" he cried out to one of the angriest of the men, "you seem to be holding an indignation meeting. If you don't get calmer by to-morrow, I shall walk away from you at golf."

"Sir," was the answer, "I beg to inform you that you are a cad, and utterly unfit for the society of gentlemen."

Dick jumped up to wipe out this insult, when he was stopped by the landlord's hand on his shoulder.

"You must leave my house at once," the man said, fiercely; "you and this—woman."

At this moment Arthur and his wife sauntered in.

BYE-WAYS IN BOHEMIA LAND

Comedies and Tragedies of London Life.

By S. J. Adair Fitz-Gerald.

Author of "The Love Thirst of Elaine," "Fame the Fiddler," "A Tragedy of Grub Street," "Stories of Famous Songs," "Stories of Famous Fairy Tales," etc., etc.

No. III.—JUST A BALLET GIRL.

One dull November day a stranger to the tavern made his appearance, and hearing one of the frequenters telling short theatrical yarns about celebrities, volunteered the following story:—

"Polly Martin," he said, "had been born and bred in the profession, as she was fond of telling her sisters in the ballet, though she failed to add that, like Sally of the song, she was also born in a garret in an alley, which alley was situated off Drury Lane. Her father at one time was a capable stage carpenter, and her mother a dresser, but Bacchus required so much worship from the former that he neglected all other duties, and became a slave to the god, who eventually proved his ruin, and allowed him to drop from the flies one night after too earnest a devotion at the shrine of alcohol. He died in the hospital, and left Mrs. Martin and little Polly to struggle on the best way they could. In course of time Mrs. Martin came down to the position of cleaner, and Polly became a pantomime fairy. And a very good fairy she was, almost as pretty as Venus herself, and as vain as a shower of butterflies. That was Polly's great trouble for many years. Her beauty spoiled her; she was vain, arrogant, and imperious—and all on twelve shillings a week, which does not seem to figure out properly. And yet, despite her foolish conceit and vanity, she was liked by most of her companions, and worshipped by the men, not only in her own set, but in the sets that were considerably above her.

"But then Polly was ambitious, and thought her face really was her fortune, and her dreams were of the time when she should quit chorus singing and ballet dancing and become the admired of all in some rôle suitable to her talents. Alas! like many a beautiful girl on the stage and off, Polly had no talent beyond grace, which is the gift of nature, and she could no more act than she could fly. But she could speak tolerably correctly, and she could pose and she could dance. Therefore throughout the greater part of the year she was always sure of an engagement at the burlesque theatres, or during Christmas at the pantomime houses. Once or twice she had been entrusted with a few lines to deliver, but her ridiculous self-consciousness stood in her way, and made her affected and wooden. Still she attracted attention, and "mashers" would crowd into the stalls nightly to admire her face and figure. It is just possible that with proper training she might have developed into a fair solo dancer, but there was no one to take the trouble to train the wayward beauty, and no manager would run the risk of failure by giving her a dance to herself. Her varying moods caused her to get the name of 'unreliable,' and when once that occurs, no matter what the cause, it is not easy to shake off the stigma. So Polly never advanced much beyond the first row of the chorus, and she became bitter and querulous in consequence.

"Now at the theatre to which she was attached one Christmas there was a young machinist named George Darleigh, who worked the traps and looked after the mechanical department of the pantomime generally, and he was struck 'all of a heap,' so to speak, with Polly. He was madly, deliriously in love with her, and she knew it. She was his queen, he was her vassal, and the least glance of her great blue eyes converted him into her willing slave. If she had been the leading lady of the theatre she could not have exacted more respectful homage from him, and yet, as a matter of fact, not in point of birth, at any rate in intellect and education he was her superior. He had an inventive turn of mind, and hoped to achieve many improvements in theatrical appliances one of these days, especially in the iron springs and supports that are used in the transformation scenes, to keep the girls in those terribly constrained positions during the evolution of fairy glades and fairy palaces that are supposed to lift to eternal summers and eternal skies of blue.

"Truth to tell, for this very forthcoming pantomime George Darleigh had made a great improvement in 'fairy supports,' and it was to be tried by some of the most reliable girls, among whom was Polly, and to Polly, and Polly only, was the knowledge imparted by George, for fear of the others taking fright at the wrong moment. For, with all her foolishness, she could be trusted in such a case, though she did not appreciate the compliment so much as George could wish.

"The rehearsals progressed very well, and the pantomime promised to be a huge success. Not so the courtship of the anxious young machinist with Polly, for she had suddenly grown cold and colder, and vowed her intention of not trusting herself to his new-fangled supports in the transformation—the old style would suit her well enough. And so persistent was she in this that George had to give in, and secretly arranged her support on the old principle on the first night, entirely against the orders of the management. It was his too great affection for the girl who now slighted him so much that led him to this breach of the rules.

"Not long before the pantomime was put on, however, George discovered the real reason of her change of manner towards him. Hanging about the stage-door every day when rehearsals were over was an insipid fopling, the Honourable Tom Salter, possessing much money and little else. Several times George Darleigh saw him and Polly drive away together, and he began to fear the worst. He ascertained from one of the girls, however, that it was only a mild flirtation and luncheon escapade, and that Polly was 'all right.' Still he did not like it. Wealthy young fellows did not pay continued attention to pretty ballet girls for the fun of the thing, or from an over abundance of platonic affection, and Darleigh grew morose and despondent, and, as she had refused to use his new support, a bitter blow to him, he, on his side, dropped the kindliness of his manner towards her and rarely spoke to her at all.

"This, without arousing any jealousy in her breast, for she knew she had no cause, simply made her mad, and, consequently, she took the dangerous step of confiding her troubles to her new admirer, the Honourable Tom. And pity, we know, oft turns to love, especially on the part of one who seeks the sympathy, and gets it. A little both sides grew in this case.

"The pantomime was produced, and was pronounced on all hands to be an artistic and commercial triumph. The new transformation scene supports were a complete success, and the manager ordered them to be used by everyone. This, at the end of a fortnight, was done, and, willy-nilly, Polly Martin had to have hers replaced as well. But she was exceedingly obstinate over the matter, and begged of George to allow her to return the old one out of sheer perversity and rage, for she hated to be thwarted. George, however, would not listen to her, but changed the supports without telling her, and would not answer her angry taunts.

"On this fateful night Polly Martin arrived at the theatre flushed and excited. She had been out with the Honourable Tom nearly the whole of the day, and had drunk several glasses of champagne with her dinner. In the dressing-room, where she was wont to be one of the quietest and steadiest, she was noisy and obstreperous, and loudly proclaimed that she was not going to trust her precious life to that Darleigh's rotten supports.

"The girls listened in silence, for they knew and felt sorry, perhaps more sorry for the inventor than for the headstrong woman, who was so fired with senseless anger against her best friend, and the man she really in

her heart loved, though she was too pride-full to own it.

"The curtain went up, and the piece proceeded all right until the transformation scene. The fairies and gods and goddesses were all in their places ready to ascend when the machinery should be put in motion. At last the transformation began to move and had got half-way up, when there was a sudden and fearful cry behind the scenes of 'Fire!'

"The machinery was at once reversed and the curtain lowered, while the girls on the supports, knowing the working well, were able to release themselves quickly and get off the stage, for it was some transformation gauze that had caught alight, and was now burning furiously.

"Then another cry arose—

"'Where's Polly Martin?' and George Darleigh rushed on to the stage towards the motionless form that was securely fastened in one of the supports by double straps.

"It was Polly Martin. She had bribed one of the men to fasten her in in the old way on the new machine, and she could not undo the strap. She was taken out, lifeless it was feared, carefully wrapped up, and carried down to the stage-door, where the Honourable Tom Salter was waiting with a specially chartered cab that was to have conveyed them to Charing Cross Station for the Continent that night.

"'Charing Cross Hospital,' shouted George Darleigh, as he placed the inanimate form of his sweetheart into the vehicle and got in with her, and the driver mechanically obeyed the new order, wonderingly.

* * * * *

"The theatre was saved, and, after a few nights, the pantomime was in order again, and performed to the end of the season. But Polly Martin never played again. It was many weeks ere she recovered from the shock to her system and the frightful injuries she sustained. George was loyal to her right through, and when she was fit to be removed had her taken to his mother's home in the country. It was in getting into the train at the station that she first saw her face in a looking-glass since the fire.

"She shrieked with terror. One side of her face and neck was a livid red. She was disfigured for life. In the train she wept all the time, and in her misery confessed everything to George Darleigh, even to the arranged elopment with—— His name was not uttered. But George loved her still.

"And in the end she and George were married. Voila tout."

"What will you take, boys?" said the stranger, after a pause. And Charles, the waiter, was busy once more.

"ATORA."

The Chicago "revelations" have dealt a heavy blow to the trade in preserved foods produced in America, and in a lesser degree to English makes as well, which are undeservedly suffering from the general distrust.

Fat, of course, plays an important part in the preparation of cooked foods of all kinds, and it is most important to get it sweet and wholesome—it is, indeed, the portion of the meat which first gets tainted.

"Atora" (which is the registered trade-mark or name of Hugon and Co., Ltd., for their refined beef suet, to distinguish it from imitations) is prepared solely from fresh English beef suet, collected by them day and night from the wholesale butchers in the public abattoirs, and refined in their works a few hours after the killing of the oxen, after they had been inspected by competent public officials. The "Atora" brand is guaranteed to be absolutely pure, no preservatives or chemicals being used, and its keeping quality is due to the sweetness of the raw suet used, and to the careful refining process it goes through afterwards.

It is supplied in 1lb. and ½lb. blocks for all purposes, and it may be obtained also ready shredded for making puddings. It is sold by all grocers and provision stores, but full particulars in booklet form, with address of nearest dealer, may be obtained from Hugon and Co., Ltd., Pendleton, Manchester.

PRACTICAL JOKES.

By P. O'T.

The late Mr. Toole once showed me, with huge delight, a visitors' list on the Continent, where he was registered as Mr. J. L. Foole. He almost seemed to glory in the name of a fool, if we may use the word in the sense of a merry wag, for he was not by any means a fool in the other sense, which we reserve for Arthur Balfour or Gilbert Parker, or W. T. Stead, or others on the borderland of imbecility.

Now, as a Yiddish writer in the *Saturday Review* has pointed out, Toole "seems to have been really an artist" (Yiddish for "a real artist") "in practical jokes." For days since his death, every paper has been full of the pranks he played, how he made a waiter believe himself distraught, how he surprised an old woman, how he mystified a mummer. It was all very funny and very good-natured.

The *Saturday* scribe says practical jokes are now out of fashion, but he is scarcely an authority on fashion. I would almost rather believe Father Vaughan, who has at least met ladies and gentlemen, if he does jump to hasty conclusions about their morals. Still more do I believe my own experience of country-houses. I have had a wet sponge poised upon my door, and have found thorns in my socks, oranges in my boots, onions in my tooth-water, brushes in my bed, not to mention a mustard leaf sewn into the seat of my trousers. Those, however, are elementary efforts at humour. Real practical jokes should be more artistic.

Good fun can be obtained with a seidlitz powder. It may be placed in your guest's basin or in any other receptacle where it is likely to come into contact with liquid, and surprising results are assured. Quinine may also be smeared upon tooth-brushes, or placed in the interstices of rolls, for it is more amusing to witness misfortunes with the naked eye than to giggle over rumours of them on a door-mat.

When you are visited by a believer in ghosts, place a bath under his bed, insert a reel of cotton in the bath, and tie a string to the reel. You can pass the string under the door and cause considerable agitation by pulling it when he has sunk into his first sleep. A cock in a basket in a cupboard will also give him a lively time in the small hours.

When a shy man is in the drawing-room after dinner, immaculately dressed and evidently desirous of shining among ladies, write on a piece of paper "Your trousers are undone," and pass the document to him with great circumspection. Let everybody into the secret, and much fun will be caused by watching the endeavours of your victim to readjust his dress without attracting attention.

There is a shop in Paris which lays itself out to supply practical jokers with paraphernalia. I bought a tube there. It is provided with merry little views, which can be examined by screwing up the eye, peering into a small aperture, and turning a handle. After two or three turns, a jet of liquid (which may be water, or ink, or vitriol, or anything you prefer) suddenly spurts into his face.

I also bought some sweets, which looked like luscious sugared almonds. The victim sucks away at them for a time, then suddenly finds his mouth full of pepper or mustard.

Cigarettes, too, with a squib in the centre, are an unfailing source of hilarity. I once gave one to a friend in a crowded bar. He was making great efforts to be agreeable, leaning and ogling over the counter as he puffed away at the fragrant tobacco. Suddenly there was a loud report, which could have been heard in the neighbouring street, and a shower of sparks flew out in every direction, singeing my friend's eyelashes and nearly setting fire to the barmaid's muslin "peek-a-boo."

For visits to the country, I can cordially recommend a supply of artificial insects. Cardboard bugs are very lifelike, and may be distributed on pillows. I have seen them captured and deposited in the slop-pail with infinite precautions. A teaspoonful of "Russian fleas" or "poil à gratter" inserted between the sheets is useful to complete the illusion, and is warranted to ensure a sleepless night. If you cannot procure the real article, sprinkle pepper on the pillow or place a pigeon inside the bed for an hour or so.

Tin ear-wigs are admirable adjuncts to the dinner table. Place one on (or better still, inside) a piece of bread, and your host will probably threaten to change his baker. You can also make money by betting your neighbour that ear-wigs will sink in a glass of water. Imitation flies, cock-roaches, spiders, and lady-birds will take people in equally well. I have seen a butler solemnly brush one of my insects on to the floor and stamp upon it.

MR. J. B. ROBINSON AND THE LATE MR. BEIT.

AN IMPORTANT TELEGRAM—AN INTERESTING REPLY.

Just on going to press with our last issue we received the following telegram from Mr. J. B. Robinson:—

My attention having been drawn to certain statements concerning myself contained in an article by Frank Harris, published in your journal John Bull of Saturday last, 4th inst., in which Harris alleges that the statements were made to him by the late Alfred Beit, I beg to state that they are a tissue of falsehoods. Beit having recently died, it is most regrettable that you should have allowed the publication of the statements made by Harris after the death of Beit, as it is impossible to believe that Beit could have been guilty of making statements so malicious in character and so utterly devoid of truth. May I trouble you to publish this telegram in your next issue?—J. B. Robinson, yacht "La Belle Sauvage," Dover.

We at once submitted this message to Mr. Frank Harris, the writer of the recent articles on the late Mr. Beit, and subjoined is his reply:—

Brighton, 10th August, 1906.

My Dear Bottomley,—

Thanks very much for sending me Mr. Robinson's wire. It is interesting, but a little difficult to deal with, because he assumes that Mr. Beit could not have been guilty of making statements which he characterises as "malicious in character and utterly devoid of truth." Surely this is to get hold of the stick by the wrong end. I have never had any but the friendliest relations with Mr. Robinson. Why on earth should I invent such statements about him? If I had wished to libel him, he must know that there are malicious statements afloat about him, as about every other millionaire in South Africa, with which I could gratify my native malevolence without putting words into a dead man's mouth. When I had a journal of my own, and could have satisfied my spite easily, why did I not, at least, hint dislike of Mr. Robinson? I rarely mentioned him then, if my memory serves me rightly; when I did mention him it was always in a friendly way. Why should I suddenly change?

The simple truth is that this story which Mr. Robinson qualifies as a "tissue of falsehoods" is a story which neither I nor any journalist nor romance-writer could have invented. I had always heard that Mr. Robinson made money at Kimberley, and went up to Johannesburg and made more. It would never have occurred to me even to imagine that Mr. Robinson lost his money in Kimberley, and went to Johannesburg to retrieve his fortunes; nor would it occur to me, or to any other sane man, that the statement of this fact, or fancy, would be regarded as an attack on Mr. Robinson. I repeated what I was told, that Mr. Robinson went to Johannesburg in '88, or thereabouts, with twenty or twenty-five thousand pounds, and made a fortune of some millions in the next seven years. I should take this as undisguised praise of Mr. Robinson and his capacities. So far, then, there is no evidence of malice on my part, but of goodwill.

There still remains the other incident—that Mr. Robinson, having been ruined by Beit, or by the amalgamation brought about by Beit and Rhodes in Kimberley, should go to Beit and ask him for money. This may seem derogatory to Mr. Robinson's dignity; but it is natural enough, and has been done in South Africa and elsewhere without exciting passionate denials. The story seemed to me to wear the livery of truth—strangeness in details with close accord to the facts of human nature. But still, the point is, How came I to invent the strange story? Why on earth should I invent it?

And if it is absurd that I invented this very extraordinary and detailed story, why should Mr. Robinson show so keen a desire to put the odium of the fiction on me? If he wishes to disprove the story, he could do so perfectly easily without calling my good faith into question. All he would have to do would be to send you his banker's reference, showing that he went to Johannesburg with £250,000 and not £25,000, or with £2,500,000, and the story would be killed dead, and Frank Harris would be left with the odium of having given publicity at least to a fiction. Or Mr. Robinson could have called on Sir Julius Wernher to corroborate his denial, when it would be clear either that I had been mistaken or had invented a lie. I suggest, sir, that that is the one thing for Mr. Robinson to do, to disprove the story if he objects to it.

If he does not choose to do this, one must still accept his denial courteously.

I need not tell you that I had no intention of libelling Mr. Robinson, even incidentally, or of telling about him a story to his hurt. I feel sure when Mr. Robinson thinks it over, he will see that, to put it at its very lowest, I could have no possible motive for doing such a thing, my relations with him having always been those of friendly acquaintanceship.

Honestly, even now I find it difficult to account for Mr. Robinson's heat—"a tissue of falsehoods," "malicious," "utterly devoid of truth." Nine-tenths of the story redounds to his credit, and the other tenth is natural enough, not in any way blameworthy, unless indeed Mr. Robinson has taken to posing as a superman.

Yours faithfully,

Frank Harris.

Personally we desire to join with Mr. Harris in an expression of regret if anything we have published has caused Mr. Robinson either offence or pain. In the absence of some direct proof to the contrary, however, we are bound, both by the tenets of journalistic etiquette as well as by implicit confidence in the brilliant writer of the articles, to assume full responsibility for what we have published. Our columns, however, are at the disposal of Mr. Robinson for the publication of any further communication with which he may favour us, tending to show that either Mr. Beit or our contributor was in error.

TO THE FALSE GOD.

Thou God whom the nations pray to,
  Thou God whom the Pious adore,
Whose blight yet lies heavy upon us
  As it lay on our sires of yore,
How long shall we quail before thee,
  And bow at the wheels of thy car,
How long shall we toil in thy bondage,
  Oh, God-of-the-Things-as-they-are?

We shout thy name in our battles,
  As we break the greatest of laws,
And the fierce red Jehovah of Slaughter
  Takes his toll from each jarring cause.
There's not a crime of the nations,
  'Midst the millions their annals mar,
But was done for thy glory and honour,
  Oh! God-of-the-Things-as-they-are!

We doom in thy name the woman
  Who has erred to a living Hell,
Whilst we smile in the gentlest censure
  On the man to whose wiles she fell.
The weak, the poor, and the helpless,
  We arraign at thy pitiless bar,
Dost thou stretch out a hand to aid them,
  Oh, God-of-the-Things-as-they-are?

We slay in thy name the heathen,
  To teach them how mild are thy ways,
And the groans of the dying savage
  We have drowned by our psalms of praise.
There's never a deed of darkness
  Which is done in a land afar,
But thy law is the warrant for it,
  Oh! God-of-the-Things-as-they-are!

How long shall the proud and mighty
  Find a shelter beneath thy name?
And how long shall the nations fear thee,
  Oh, thou God of the people's shame?
When? when shall they turn for succour
  To a Holier far than thee?
To the God of the world's salvation,
  The God-of-the-Things-which-should-be?

Stanley Portal Hyatt.

WOMEN.

By Jim Crow.

Males, in every age and every country, have blown off their superflous spleen in abusing or ridiculing the fair sex. This is often due to jealousy, sometimes to mortification, always to stupidity.

Limitations of Ladies.

I am not denying that ladies have their limitations, but I defy you to exhibit any virtue or engaging quality wherein the average woman does not surpass the average man. And their very limitations entitle them to additional admiration.

Female Combinations.

They have always been downtrodden or put upon or set aside by males, who invented and administer the dictum that the weakest must go to the wall. They have, in fact, never had a fair chance. The reason for this is that they lack the power of combination. They are not only more numerous than men, but also better diplomatists, and if they could agree upon concerted action they would soon have their own way in the world, as they already do in the family.

Vice.

Statistics show that they live longer than men. One reason for this is that they lead saner and more reasonable lives. Most men give way to their appetites, drink too much, eat too much, give a free rein to their affections; most women do just the reverse. Among the working classes it is the woman who keeps the household together, regulates the budget with prudence, denies and even starves herself to make both ends meet, while her lord and master fuddles himself in a public-house, backs losers, and makes an ass of himself in a thousand different ways. In the professional classes it is the man who scatters sovereigns for a sumptuous repast at restaurants, frequents the promenades of music-halls, or ruins himself in wild speculations; while the woman supervises the household, buys bargains, effects economies, and generally submits to the dictates of common sense.

Sanity.

Take the case of a woman going up to town for the day. When she meets her friends she does not slap them on the back, shout "Have a drink?" and hurry them off to the nearest American bar. She does not even think herself entitled to lunch at the Café Royal; but is content with a glass of milk and a cake at the pastry-cook's. She squeezes herself into an omnibus, when her lord would have taken a cab. If she espies an attractive member of the other sex, she does not leer at him or follow him or offer to drive him home. Of course, I am speaking of the average, typical woman. There are exceptions to every rule. In any case, a lapse from sobriety or virtue is thought much more strange and shocking in a woman than it is in a man.

Generosity.

"Women are generous, but not precise in money matters," said Disraeli. I think they are both. They are generous to everyone except themselves. They are always ready to assist a friend or a husband or even a stranger. If there were no women there would be no beggars in the streets. For one man who will interest himself in the slums, succour the poor, and put himself out to ameliorate the lot of humanity, I should think you would find a thousand women. Of course, I except politicians, whose philanthropy is not altogether disinterested.

Maids v. Moujiks

Much cheap wit has lately been directed against certain ladies, who venture to believe that taxation and representation ought to go together. They have been scolded for disturbing public meetings and dogging a Cabinet Minister, and indulging in other mild forms of demonstration. But I really do not see why, if they want votes, they should not make an effort to secure them. It seems strangely illogical to applaud Russian bomb-throwers, who clamour for what they are pleased to call liberties, and at the same time to condemn English women who are content with peaceful persuasion in much the same interest. It may be unladylike to wave flags and shout behind the grille of the House of Commons, but is it any more genteel to wreck trains or blow up governors? I am not arguing for or against the liberties of maids or moujiks. I merely contend that it is absurd to import questions of manners into the political arena.

To Sum Up.

Women are better-looking than men, better dressed, better behaved, more amusing, more sane, more patient, less selfish, less cowardly (especially in the matter of pain), less reticent—in fact, altogether more human. At the same time I must admit that I am thankful not to be a member of their gentle sex.

SHERRY WINE.

By a Commissioner.

I wonder why no one has ever studied the psychology of fashion. No doubt it is quite natural that we should tire of a collar, or a coat, or a game, or a wine, the craving for variety being as old as Eve. But there must be causes directing the successive changes; there may be laws governing the swing of the pendulums.

In the case of wines, impulses of fashion are to be found in commercial treaties, medical advice, and all sorts of accidents, quite as much as in the whims of the great. The port age, the claret age, the whisky age, are as distinct as the stone age, the flint age, courage and dotage.

Thirty years ago sherry was very high in public favour. It was served at every meal and between meals. I am old enough to remember when, with certain classes, a glass of sherry and a piece of cake were as popular in the afternoon as a cup of tea to-day. Then came some fancy about gout, and sherry almost disappeared from the dinner-table.

Now, however, there are signs of a revival. The Spanish match may have had something to do with this. Doctors have confessed that there is, after all, not a twinge of gout in a hogshead, while they recognise sherry as a prime restorative after influenza. The sherry cure is becoming a potent rival to the milk cure, the grape cure, and the pedicure. Why, the very bar-loafer calls aloud for "a sherry and bitters, miss," instead of demanding gin and bitters, dognose, or the Yankee abominations yclept cocktails. At least, so I am told.

Hafiz said: "Sell in the tavern the prayer carpet; sell, I say, and buy a jug of wine." And again he said: "Do not allow me to be buried in the dust on the day of my death. Convey me to the tavern and throw me into the cask of wine." I do not go so far as this, but if I were the Duke of Clarence I shoud prefer a butt of sherry to Malmsey for my funereal rites.

There is body and vigour and life and iron in sherry. It is an ideal tonic, and has very properly been preferred above all other wines by the pharmacopœia.

In its adaptability it yields to none. You may drink it on an empty stomach or a full stomach; before, during, and after a meal; with fish, or flesh, or fowl, or fruits; even with tobacco-smoke or after champagne. And you may be perfectly certain that it will never disagree. Indeed, it is known as the post-prandial whitewash, and corrects all culinary or bibulous indiscretions.

It should be the poor man's wine; for, bottled or unbottled, it never loses its excellence. While champagne may live for twenty years, and port perhaps for a hundred, sherry (like Tokay) is practically immortal. Neither time nor air seems to have any evil effect upon it. This may appear unimportant to the man of means, but it is comforting to the small householder who fears to open a bottle of good wine, lest on the morrow it should only be fit to cast before swine.

Dear Sir, or Madam, or Miss, or Master—

I am so glad you like my paper. May I send you half a dozen stamped post-cards, all ready just to be addressed to some of your friends, telling them to take it in? Yours very faithfully, John Bull.

BULL'S EYES.

The German word for a steam boat is Dampfschiff. It sounds like a perspiring night-gown.

Parliament, when sitting, costs the nation about £10 a minute. The even tenner of its sway is costly, but what is ten pounds among so many when there is a division?

Mr. Lyulph Stanley, M.P., has asked the Chairman of the Kitchen Committee of the House of Commons, whether the Cheshire cheese, supplied to members, comes from Cheshire or from America; in fact, whether it is "the cheese." We propose to ask the same gentleman whether the Brussels sprouts we eat there come from Brussels or from Triangle Camp.

Edna May asks in *London Opinion*: "If a woman be attractive and clever, why shouldn't she be admired?" We don't know, but Edna may.

Says the Ladies' Home Journal: "Many girls really need to learn the secret of relaxation. . . . No better place can be found for putting this into practice than during a rail-road journey."

The South-Eastern on Bank Holiday, to wit.

The papers have been informing a palpitating nation that King Edward's latest great-nephew, son of the Duchess Victoria of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, was born on August 2 at twenty to nine. Those who backed the event at starting price are now busy working out the odds.

Gulls were seen on Bank Holiday hovering about the Thames between Blackfriars and Waterloo Bridges. The Stock Exchange was closed.

Five young birds have been reared by a pair of water-wagtails which built a nest in a beer-box on board the Queen Elizabeth, at Fulham. The progeny is ale and hearty.

The Archbishop of Canterbury said his milk simile would hold water. So does milk sometimes. Ask Decanterbury's butler.

Kaiser Wilhelm says that, unlike doctors or lawyers, journalists undergo no examinations before practising their profession. Neither do Kaisers.

Mr. Churchill snubbed Mr. Byles, M.P., the pro-Zulu. In fact, he gave Byles Beans. But it didn't move him.

A carman charged with cruelty to a horse, said the animal was perfectly sound until it caught sight of the bobby, when it suddenly appeared lame. So did his story.

A lump of virgin gold, the size of a goose's egg, has been found at Boo, near Castlerea. We should like to say "Boo!" to the goose that laid it.

"*Jack*," hailing from Chichester, writes to the *Daily Mirror* that he courted his wife in the hunting field, by giving her a lead and opening gates for her. He forgets to add that his wife now opens the door for *him*—after midnight—and gives him a lead—to bed.

Mr. H. G. Wells, the modern Jules Verne, has been talking about his recent visit to America. What most impressed him was the smaller value apparently placed upon human life there than in Europe. We ourselves sat outside one of the conduit system electric tram-cars the other day, next to one of our Yankee cousins. He struck up a conversation by remarking: "Well, I reckon we wouldn't have spent so much on this rail in the States. We should have had an overhead wire. It's much cheaper to bury a few passengers."

The other day the *Express* came out with the wild double-column headline, "The Empire at Stake." If it had sent a reporter to look round the restaurants, it would have discovered that a considerable portion of it was at chops.

Four new brands of whisky are shortly to be placed on the market—"Cracyaristotbelleditionment," "Agaphyon," "Sempermicklement," and "Skabrigdantyfuge." None of them may do anybody any harm when he gets it, but people who ask for it should be careful. It might bring on dysphonia clericorum or laryngismus stridulus.

Mr. W. J. Bryan, the silver-tongued orator of America, asked, in the course of a glowing period at Westminster Hall the other day: "What would the world have lost if Shakespeare or Burns had been killed as youths in some obscure fight?" Bartlett's Book of Familiar Quotations.

Mr. Winston Churchill announces that the Government will celebrate his birthday on November 30th by "finally putting a stop to the recruiting of Chinese." It is a pity the Government came into office just after his last birthday.

At the London and North-Western Railway Company's sale of unclaimed property the other day, a gentleman secured 100 boxes of pills for four shillings. One of our contemporaries put it that he had taken "the lot."

Mr. P. O'Brien summed it all up delightfully in regard to the German torches used in the Chamberlain birthday festivities: "Protection has gone to blazes," said he. This must be torchure to the whole-hoggers.

There was a demonstration last week in Hyde Park to sympathise with the Russian people. We hear that Mr. Keir Hardie, by mistake, found himself in the wrong park, having travelled by the Zoo-Loo Tube.

Speaking of the South Manchester election in 1885, Sir Henry Roscoe tells how Jacob Bright was defeated by "the youngest Hamilton, a nice boy. He is said to have ingratiated himself with the voters by teaching the children to toboggan on a tea-tray from the top of the stairs. This brought him to the top of the *poll*." No doubt it did.

A contemporary has headed Mr. Rudyard Kipling's recent Jingo screed:

KIPLING'S LAST POEM.

This is indeed good news.

Under the heading of "Waterloo Landmarys," the *Evening News* refers to the rumoured sale of the Mont St. Jean farm. If the Water-"Loo" is the diminutive of Louisa, we can understand the land "Marys," but it is a far-fetched joke—all the way from Belgium, too.

An American ostrich farmer intends to introduce this creature, beloved of ladies, to London life, and, following the example of the hotel where you catch the trout you want for your dinner, he intends to let his customers "carve" the feathers they fancy. The best place to locate the birds will be in grocers' shops, for, of course, every schoolboy knows that ostriches like to hide their heads in the sugar.

The Denbighshire Education Committee's minutes of their last meeting were dated June 22, 1606. We understand there are references in it to secular education being logical and inevitable, but inopportune.

A contemporary's correspondent in America telegraphs that sacred bulls are being imported from India. The Washington Agriculture Department objected at first, but relented on seeing the "progency" of a sacred cow. We suppose that "progency" is one of the "bulls."

According to Truth, everything in England is now sacrificed to money, and money excuses almost everything. Still, it is as well not to sorrow as one without hope in the world. One of these fine days virtue may be its own reward.

There would not be nearly so much scream about conscription in this country if those who did the screaming had to line up at the sound of the bugle. Nobody is shouting for compulsory Army service except those who know they are too old at forty.

Fancy the *Right Hon. St. John Brodrick* rising on his hind legs to criticise Mr. Haldane's Army scheme. It is enough to make a cat laugh.

In recognition of his service to the City, Mr. Balfour will visit Manchester to receive a presentation in October. The worthy gentleman has already been decorated with the Order of the Boot, but he left so hurriedly that there was no time to present it.

In Pennsylvania a woman over ninety has recently died through falling from a cherry-tree. Wicked old woman—at her age, too. If this is the same cherry-tree George Washington said he cut down with his little hatchet, it proves that George "the first in peace, first in war," etc., was not quite so truthful as other fibbers say he was.

When falling down a precipice, always cut the rope below you—not above; the man over you will see to that.

The Archbishop of Canterbury says he is like a game of chess. He has lived in two castles, has a mate, is both a knight and a bishop, and has mixed with kings and queens. Being well supplied with the pieces, "pawn" is a word unknown. At present he is check to the Education Bill.

Ireland has more centenarians (497) than England, France, and Germany combined. A contemporary suggests this is because Irishmen live "a quiet life." Who said "Donnybrook"?

Bart Kennedy says: "If I had a son particularly stupid, I would never rest till I had got him safely through the university." What a lot of people we meet who have had chances of matriculating!

Anti-Socialist writes to a contemporary, suggesting that a machine connected with an electric battery should be placed at street corners; after turning the handle for half-an-hour 3d. should drop out. We can imagine the children getting ready to dance, and ironically inquiring as to the monkey's whereabouts.

An advertisement commences thus:—"If you can't Eat—Work—Think—Sleep——" We did not read further, but our advice is, marry the girl, or take to drink.

There was a discussion recently as to "Suffragist" or "Suffragette." The best classification perhaps would be: Married, "hen-peckers"; single, "men-peckers"; and widows, "would(be)peckers."

It is asserted that London has never been in the hands of a foreign foe. We were under the impression that Saffron Hill, Park Lane, Soho, and the East End were still parts of the great metropolis.

An American professor, who is the president of the League of Civil Improvement, has been advocating what the *Daily Mail* calls "Marriage by Approbation," the chief idea being a six months' licence to court, followed by an indissoluble tie. Some lovers have too much licence as it is, which causes them to take liberties—not the kind of ties the worthy professor advocates.

The male boa-constrictor is said to have 320 pairs of ribs. Presuming the lady is similarly constructed, corsage agents would do well to leave that field unexplored. One can imagine the pathos of the lover's farewell grip.

A contemporary states: "The heat of the human body is about 98 degrees; that of the swallow 112 degrees," and yet two swallows do not make a summer.

Australia exported last year 24,000,000 rabbit-skins. "To kill this enormous number," says a contemporary, "cost £65,000." It seems a lot of money to kill the skins, but we should like the opinion of the rabbit.

The Poet Laureate has one hobby—stamp-collecting. It's about time he commenced writing poetry.

To those of our readers who occasionally take part in electioneering, we wish to point out that, according to the evidence in a case tried at the Thames Police Court, 8lb. of ripe tomatoes can be bought for 2½d.

We are getting on. Leather is now adulterated with Epsom salts and glucose. To suggest a dose of salts now is equivalent to offering the boot. We pity the rising race, perceiving here a double duty.

One of the recently-elected Labour members has bought two dozen white hats, and presented them to his colleagues. It is all very well beginning at the top, but if this sort of thing goes much further down, each Labour member will require a strictly private dressing-room to cope with eventualities.

INDIGESTION

IS THE SOURCE OF THE MOST SERIOUS DISORDERS THAT AFFECT THE

LIVER & KIDNEYS

AS WELL AS THE

STOMACH

Nearly all your minor ailments and many dangerous diseases begin with some disorder of your stomach, liver or kidneys, affecting the processes of digestion and nutrition. In health the daily expenditure of vital force is replaced by the digestion of food, but when digestion fails, the sources of bodily repair are cut off, and the vital organs are starved and poisoned.

When your stomach is in Good Condition Almost Every Function of the Body will be perfectly Performed.

Good Digestion means Pure Blood, Proper Assimilation of Food—Perfect Nutrition of Bone, Muscle and Nerve.

Nothing keeps a man or a woman down like indigestion or liver trouble – nothing lifts them up so quickly as a course of Mother Seigel's Syrup. It braces the nerves, purifies and enriches the blood, creates appetite, assists digestion.

MOTHER SEIGEL'S SYRUP

is the Best Known Remedy for all

Stomach Troubles.

A CASE IN POINT.

'I feel I must thank you for the wonderful cure brought about in me by Mother Seigel's Syrup—it is like living in another world compared with how I used to be. For four years or more I had suffered torture from indigestion, and though I had been under doctors and also had attended hospitals, I could find no relief. There was always a weight or pressure on my chest, and after food I had to endure most awful pains in the stomach and back. I became afraid of food, and ate as little as I could, but I only lost strength without getting rid of the pain. I also suffered fearfully from headache and altogether I hardly cared whether I lived or died. Then it was that I turned to Mother Seigel's Syrup, and found the remedy I had needed so long. Almost at once the pain left me, and I went on improving; I could eat without fear and soon I picked up strength again. I am now quite cured but I still keep the Syrup by me, and I shall always praise it." Letter of Mrs. Lizzie Cope, 50, Great College Street, Camden Town, London, N.W., November 30, 1905.

TRY IT YOURSELF!

Thousands and Thousands of People

GIVE TESTIMONY OF

Quick and Lasting Cures.

The 2s. 6d. bottle contains three times as much as the 1s. 1½d. size.

JOHN BULL'S LETTER BAG.

E. A. W. (Streatham), after extensive inquiries, says the following is the "result" of the Weekly Journal Selling Stakes:—

JOHN BULL 1
M.A.P. 2
P.T.O. 3

Also ran: Modern Society, London Opinion, and others.

F. C. W. (Birmingham) draws our attention to a police-court case in which the prisoner, a tobacconist's assistant, was stated to have been in sole charge of the business, and "in a position of great trust," at a salary of £1 per week! This, of course, does not excuse him for having appropriated some of his employer's goods, but it throws some light upon the matter.

F. W. D. (Bristol) calls our attention to an advertisement in *Answers* of August 4th, calculated to mislead the unwary into thinking that for £4 10s. they were getting a Premier or a Humber cycle.

G. D. (Thorne, Yorks), as a J.P. and County Councillor since 1889, endorses our recent remarks on the police and the public, and adds: "The rottenness is that out of each conviction a portion of the costs goes to swell the police pension fund." We entirely agree.

W. T. M. (Lewes), to whom we inadvertently referred last week as an anti-vivisector instead of anti-vaccinator (although we are pleased to know he is both), sends us what he correctly calls a delightful instance of magisterial impudence, to which we refer elsewhere.

J. W. (Wakefield), a personal friend of the late Mr. Bradlaugh, says he can confirm what we said about him in our recent Open Letter to Mr. Burns.

P. H. B. (Liverpool) sends us a batch of swindling advertisements of a parcel of baby's clothes which "a lady" wishes to dispose of. She says they have never been worn. She does not explain how she came to order them, but if it was a case of counting her chickens before they were hatched, it is about time she ceased to proclaim the fact. The advertisement has been appearing continuously for the last five years.

W. W. (Bradford) and many other readers have sent us further literature and documents relating to the swindling methods of the British Watch Company. We regret we have no space for further exposure of these people, but we are sending a specimen of one of their watches and chains to the Chief Commissioner of Police. Perhaps, if he can make no other use of it, he will place it in the Crime Museum.

A. C. (Aylesford) has been called upon by a traveller representing himself as coming from Cassell and Co., and been induced to sign an order for "one volume" of Dickens' works; and then a firm called A. W. Cowan, of 10, New Bridge Street, Blackfriars, try to foist the whole series on him. If the facts be as stated by A. C., he need not trouble further about the matter.

G. H. M. (Birmingham) forwards us some of "Davis and Co.'s" advertisements under various aliases, and also a reply he has received from Wilmshurst and Co., of 119, St. Mary Street, Cardiff, to a letter he wrote in response to an advertisement for a manager of agents—the main point of which is that Wilmshurst and Co., who describe themselves as "public" accountants and fire loss assessors, require a deposit of £100 "as security which may be deposited on terms of withdrawal at three months' notice." They say they are "acting on behalf of a firm of woollen merchants and manufacturing clothiers dealing direct with the public upon unique principles." As Wilmshurst and Co. are apparently in the insurance line, may we ask whether they have ever heard of such things as fidelity bonds, which are issued by most sound and respectable insurance offices?

A. C. (East Ham) forwards the names of three Fleet Street business firms, whose methods he thinks require investigation. We shall be glad to have further particulars.

A. D. (Westbourne Crescent) protests against the extortion by certain London offices of registration fees for people requiring boarders, etc. We agree that all such offices should be placed under official inspection.

An anonymous correspondent justly complains that the London publicans, as a body, are indifferent to the wishes of their customers, by taking no steps during very hot weather to cool the drinks they supply, and most of which, says our friend, "go down quite like molten lead." He contrasts this with the little bierhaller of Germany and other Continental establishments. We think the hint is worth taking.

G. M. (Pontypridd) responded to an advertisement for a local representative of a high-class firm of publishers, at a salary of £3 a week and commission, but in due course discovered that he was expected to work for the first month without any salary, on behalf of the Caxton Publishing Co., of 23 and 24, Bridge Street, Bristol, Surrey Street, London, and elsewhere, selling Century Bibles and similar sacred works. He has declined the honourable position.

A. J. H. (Bristol) thinks we are too Radical in our political tendencies, and objects to "the laudatory references to the weakest and most bigoted Prime Minister we have had for many, many decades, and to other narrow-minded jacks-in-office." We beg to refer him to our recent Open Letters to Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman and Dr. Clifford.

J. A. B. (Battersea) likes our Open Letter to John Burns, whom he looks upon as "the only true Labour man of the present century and of all time." This is rather a large order; but then J. A. B. is one of John's constituents.

An anonymous gentleman sends us a post-card to the House of Commons, awarding us a dog biscuit "as the dirtiest dog of the week." Of course, being unable to identify our correspondent, and not knowing either his habits or his occupation, we are not in a position to dispute his authority on the subject of dirty dogs, so we are content to take him as a sample of the purists whose nostrums we have been endeavouring to combat. After all, these are the dog days.

E. G. C. (Inverness) calls our attention to an infamous and transparent swindle called the "Fell Formula Association," and sends us a cleverly mimeographed letter written to a lady, full of lies and humbug. The address of the "Fell Association for Reducing Corpulency" is 205, Regent Street. As soon as the police have finished with Madame D'Angeley, they had better look up Mr. A. P. Lewis, the "adviser" to the show.

Several Readers send us the official solution of Fraser and Co.'s (51, Milton Street, London) fifteen-square puzzle. It is one of the cleverest catches we have ever seen. There were "no winners," but competitors are given another chance—provided they buy some more of Fraser and Co.'s picture post-cards! We do not think the entries will be numerous.

C. R. (Highgate) writes again about "filthy foreign food being 'dumped' into this country," and asks our remedy. Our reply is simple. We would lock up anyone selling "filthy food," whether it came from abroad or not. C. R. also asks how do we account for the enormous increase in the consumption of Australian wine? Because it is cheap, and is full of "body." But no one should drink it in the summer.

A. T. L. (Wotton-under-Edge) says his grocer intends "keeping his large stock of tinned goods out of sight for the next five years," believing that after that time they will be as much in demand as ever. Possibly when he looks for the food at the end of that period he may find it has disappeared—especially if we have a few more summers like this one.

ALCOHOLIC EXCESS
Drink and Drug Habits Cured at home, in 3 to 7 weeks, by the
Telegrams: Turvert, London. TURVEY TREATMENT Telephone 5494 Gerrard.
Publicly tested before Medical Committee (see Press Report). The Treatment entails no inconvenience and, in addition to entirely eradicating the crave for Alcohol or Drugs, has a most beneficial effect on the patient's health. The *Daily Chronicle* says: "A remarkable success." *Truth* states: "Has had really good effects." Resident patients also taken. Consultations, personal or by letter, without charge. The medicine for each case is prepared by a Qualified English Doctor and can be sent to any part of the world.
WRITE FOR ILLUSTRATED 63-PAGE TREATISE (FREE), OR CALL.
Med. Supt., TURVEY TREATMENT CO., Ltd., 68, AMBERLEY HOUSE, NORFOLK ST., STRAND, LONDON.

RACING NOTES AND IDEAS.

By W. Lotinga.

("Larry Lynx" of "The People.")

No Chance for Welters.

The heavier weighted jockeys urge as a very lamentable but very true fact that very few horses carrying 8st. 7lb. or over win races nowadays.

Object to Criticism.

Some executives resent one's comments in regard to defects at their meetings, but they are, nevertheless, practical enough—sooner or later—to bring about the suggested alterations, even to the rebuilding of entrances or stands.

The Midlands Like It.

Notice how invariably Monday's racing is far afield from the Metropolis, thus involving the Sunday or very early morning journey, so that people who have been at it as "regulars" until the previous Saturday naturally grumble.

Can't Come Twice.

Backers can take it as a maxim to act upon that any animal competing on the present frightfully hard ground is no good for a second dose inside of a week. We have seen this repeatedly lately, for the first effort takes all the steel out of them.

With Walter Hyde.

"Kempton August" would be considered by everybody —other than the executive and shareholders—as really the most pleasant gathering on the extremely pretty, and flat, Sunbury course the year through. It is peacefulness and pleasure itself—we miss the crush, fashion and society of a Jubilee Day—the crowd and bustle of a Bank Holiday meeting. There is plenty of elbow room in all directions, and with fields usually of just a nice average size, every phase of each struggle can be seen, and one knows what the proper market prices are and can get the top odds. This week's sport, and meeting, was quite up to the average, the long titled City of London Breeders' Foal Stakes attracting better horses than usual, while if we missed the cracks in the International Two-Year-Old Stakes, there are always plenty of good second-raters to compete for the £800. The going at Kempton is never bad—their costly irrigation prevents it—and excepting at Hurst Park, we never see the ground anywhere else such a beautiful bright green and so abundantly herbaged. If one notices the horses canter down, such fact immediately strikes them by the way in which they stride out, even the veteran platers who at some meetings go down like the proverbial cats on hot bricks, or potter along so that you are immediately "put off" backing them.

Lewes.

If the programme—which presented what may well be termed an apology for racing—had figured at any other period than at the conclusion of the adjacent Brighton meeting, it must have fared badly as regards attendance. Racegoers know too well from experience first of all how unget-at-able the Lewes race ground is, and further, what discomforts are met with in the very probable event of rain, mist, or sudden squalls. The Sussex fortnight invariably tapers very much towards its end, but the regulars, having followed the game closely, invariably see it out, so that, whether the concluding two days had been at Lewes or Timbuctoo, the great majority of professionals—backers or bookmakers—would be there, and bet upon classic horses, or donkeys, in the endeavour either to "make a bit" before settling day or "get out." After its failure for the past two seasons, it is not surprising to hear that the Lewes Stakes of £3,000 will not be repeated. The handicap, too, of last Saturday, is nothing now to what it used to be when worth £1,000, and won by good horses as a stepping-stone to even greater achievements. At one time, too, the Northern trainers used to lay themselves out for it, but, as mentioned last week, a poor original entry, and absolutely "rotten" acceptance, left both the chief handicaps, the Sprint on Friday and the Lewes Handicap on Saturday respectively, at the mercy of the Goodwood and Newbury runners up—Twelvebore and King Duncan. But what sort of fields did they beat?

The Ebor Handicap.

I am certain that I am echoing the sentiments of the racing world (especially if they happen to have backed the horse if he wins) when expressing the hope that Major Edwards—who is seriously ill, although not quite in the condition which the alarmist reports of last week suggested—may have a "double event"—immediate complete convalescence and a victory with Golden Measure in the Ebor Handicap. It would be a deserved belated golden salve of both kinds.

It was somewhat remarkable, and quite as usual, that the Major should smash up, and be smashed up in, somebody else's car. He had been the guest of Mr. "Imber" at Dicker, and was offered the loan of his absolutely new car to run up to Gatwick. Not many days later it was the Major's horse, Golden Measure, who lost Mr. "Imber's" Sandboy the Goodwood Stakes through his having to jump the favourite when he fell in front of him. Apropos of the Ebor, as Golden Measure is no worse for his fall, it is only common-sense for those who backed him into favouritism for pretty heavy sums to adhere to the golden chestnut now. He is not a great horse, and certainly not a lucky one, but I think he is quite good enough to win this event, despite the rather unfair estimate of the handicappers in putting him up 3lb. for a beating—due, doubtless, to the fact of the "good" money he was supported for. Still, the horse did not win, and should therefore have certainly either been left exactly as he was relatively with the others or given the advantage of a pound or two.

Prophecy.

The Rusk colt—probably named John Bull in the interim—assuming we get some rain, will be given another opportunity in Kempton's Two-Year-Old Selling on Thursday, and unless encountering another Sir Frusquin, will win—anyhow, it is advisable to back him. Pollion's forward running at Brighton on Thursday last also suggests his having some sort of chance in the Selling Handicap. But the safest investment of the week is Kolo for the Handicap at Windsor on Saturday.

Important to Backers.

I have always realised that it is nearly as difficult for hundreds of little backers—and very much more important—to find a safe bookie who will "pay up" as it is to "find" winners. My drastic articles upon this subject and my warnings to backers must be pretty well known, seeing what a huge weekly correspondence I get on this topic. In further endeavouring to HELP my readers, especially followers, I will gladly answer any reasonable query—in confidence and without guarantee —concerning any firm of bookmakers—giving my opinion (and experience) as to whom you may bet with and the MANY you MUSTN'T deal with. It is a positive fact that 9 out of 10 of the advertising, especially circularising "s.p. merchants" are swindlers—and one-half of the small remainder are only "straight—ish"—that is, will pay SOME people under certain circumstances, if there is no loophole or excuse! My chief aim is to prevent backers finding out the "stumers" AFTER they have backed winners; how many do, after paying when they lose for weeks, and how mortifying is it! But what can one do? The law protects and fosters these cliques of villains, whilst their great safeguard is that most of their victim-clients dare not move owing to their position. The only preventative is to be sure of your

bookie before you bet—specious circulars, swagger stationery, or even an advertisement in a reputable paper, is not the slightest guarantee of two things—a firm's solvency and honest intentions; the latter is really the most important, for lots of the biggest rogues trading (namely, having "receiving" offices) have plenty of money, but they only pay a trifle as "bait."

My Plan.

With the assent of the proprietors, these all-important matters are to be entirely in my hands, and I will do the utmost to save backers their money and help those who will help themselves. Apart from giving personal advice by correspondence—which has become so voluminous—it will save a lot of inquiry and replies if this page is made a perfect directory for backers; thus they can be assured that they may deal with ANY FIRM WHOSE ADVERTISEMENT APPEARS IN THIS PAPER. The scrutiny will be of the very closest, and NO advertisement will be accepted—as is usually the case, even with the leading issues, because the firms—anxious to "get in"—will pay any exorbitant prices demanded. Thus the proprietors of newspapers who OUGHT to protect their readers are really aiding their being fleeced because of the trifling benefit to their own profits. Pretty "hot" statements, I trow—but how TRUE! In this regard the country papers are villainous—they accept anybody, and even include giving the firms laudatory articles to quote; it is from the country that the swindlers get all their "mugs"—many of them won't even bet with Londoners, who are supposedly too wide-awake. Pray do not ALL write me at once, even to inquire whether the man you "do" with now is all right. He may seem so as long as you keep on losing or only win a "little." But the day may come when you might win "something worth having," or that "it doesn't suit him to pay"—a very frequent occurrence. You don't want to discover then—too late—that all the time you have been "paymaster-general," you never stood any real chance of winning anything substantial. Many firms are living (at high rates) upon what they receive, and cannot, even if they would, settle when that invariable "bad week" comes—especially at the back end. It is so useful to owe it over the winter when there's "nothing doing," or to start afresh the next season on the same clients in a new name! I have gone through the mill, and once, when doing the thing of a lifetime, bringing off a Cesarewitch and Cambridgeshire "double," didn't get the money. First excuse and then the usual abuse was forthcoming, but that man never ceased trading, and is still circularising and still advertising (where they will take him) to let others in. Thousands have had similar aggravating experiences, hence my warning and keenness upon protecting them. In a final word, watch these pages, and bet with—and ONLY with—those firms whose advertisement appears.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

"S. P."—Do not deal.

CESAREWITCH.—The firm are safe, but are offering you unfair, cramped odds.

CHATHAM.—Strongly advise no transactions.

R. D. T.—They are swindlers trading in various names at different addresses.

KING DUNCAN.—Leave them to work their own system.

PETER (Dulwich).—Having unfortunately betted with them you had better pay, for they know how to put the "screw" on.

JOHN BULL.—Read "Racing Notes" this week, and see who advertises in the future.

LADY BACKER.—On no account part with any deposit—they are wrong 'uns.

IN DOUBT.—Have had hundreds of complaints. Pray cease dealing, for you would never be paid any substantial amount.

WEST ENDER.—He is warned off as a defaulter, but as it is not his own name, and he is not known, the gatekeepers can't well act under the order.

R. PAYNE.—Never take any notice of books of terms you receive unsolicited; remember that NO genuine firm offers credit indiscriminately.

ANTI-SPORT.—The rules you send are obviously those of wrong 'uns. "Well known in Tattersall's" means nothing, and is only a catchpenny.

FLEECED.—Keep your £50, for you would surely never even see the deposit back again. They are dead wrong, so you have saved your money through writing.

ODDS ON.—Take it as an indelible rule that unless a London man belongs to the Albert, Victoria, Beaufort, or Oxford, he is no good. He would be a member if he could.

PATERFAMILIAS.—It is a mere pretext to avoid payment, and a very stereotyped dodge. Don't be bluffed, and if not settled with, write me again, and I'll advise you what to do.

LIVERPUDLIAN.—They are only "straight-ish." Why will you run risks when there are so many good men about?

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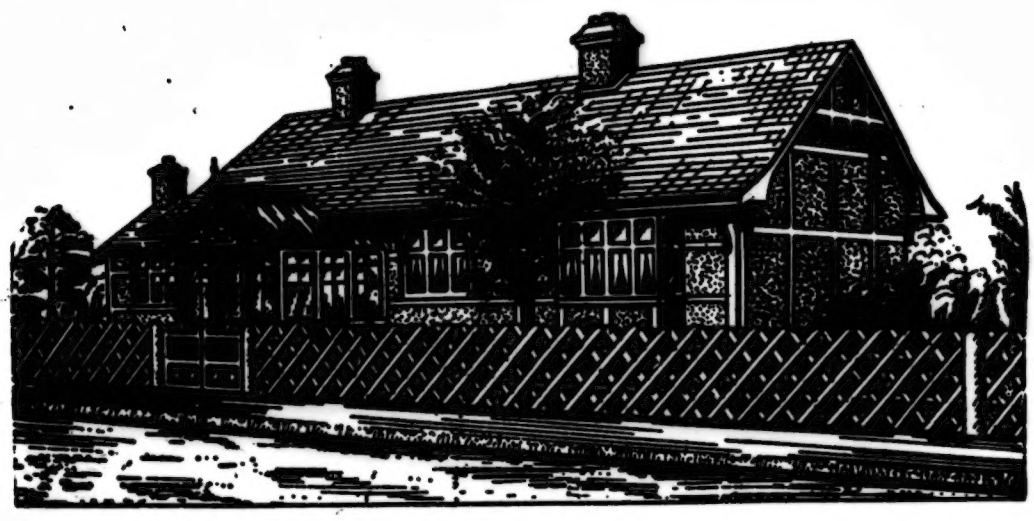

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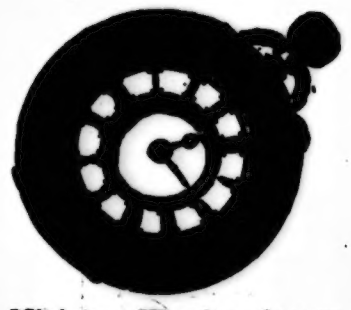

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Printed for the Proprietors by ODHAMS LIMITED, 93 and 94, Long Acre, and 5, Burleigh Street, Strand, W.C., and Published at 186, Fleet Street, London, E.C.

Applications for Advertisement Space in "JOHN BULL" must be made to Messrs. GREEVEBERG & Co., Ltd., Advertising Contractors, 80, Chancery Lane, London, W.C. Telephone 212 Holborn.